

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XIV, No. 3 Winter, 1998

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Archpastoral Letter of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN 1999 — The Year of Evangelistic Outreach



Christ is Born! Glorify Him!
Beloved Fathers and Faithful of our
Diocesan Family,

Throughout our Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, the coming 1999 is the final year of our preparation for the celebration of the Millennium. We have dedicated this year to Evangelistic Outreach in all our parishes. As such, our goal will be to make every effort to reach out and invite others to worship with us, to learn about Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church, and to consider becoming members of the True Faith.

We begin this endeavor, mindful of the Magi from the East in the story of Christ's Nativity, those pagan Gentile astrologers who saw the Star of Bethlehem in the heavens and came in search of the newborn King of the Jews. Their search took them from their homelands to the palace of Herod in Jerusalem and finally to the City of David, to the exact spot over which the star stood, *where the young Child was* (Matt. 2: 9).

It is no accident that Saint Matthew, writing his Gospel for a Jewish audience, cites the Wise men — the first-fruits of the Gentile nations, as the first worshippers of Christ. *And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His Mother, and fell down and worshipped Him* (Matt. 2:11). The evangelist wishes to praise these Gentile travelers for their belief, to encourage his readers to emulate them and to chastise those people (who were originally chosen by God and prepared for His Son's coming by the Law and the Prophets) who did not believe.

Saint Matthew is mindful of the Lord's own wish that the Church be open to all men, for the words of His Great Commission before His Ascension into Heaven indicate this very thing: *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 (Matt. 28:19-20). Obedient to this command of Christ we must "reach out" with the Good News of His Gospel message as perfectly preserved in our Orthodox Christian heritage.

Called By God

Through our own Baptism, we have been called to proclaim the Good News of the wonderful deeds which reveal God's plan of salvation. St. Peter tells us, *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own People, called to declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light* (1 Peter 2: 9-10).

Yet it is only when we have personally accepted the Good News and experienced its power that we are capable of sharing it with others. Any of us who hope to share our Faith with others need continual conversion by and to the Gos-

pel of Christ.

Evangelization means sharing the Good News. But, before we can evangelize others, we need to be continually evangelized ourselves, to experience the ongoing "growth in life and faith and spiritual understanding" which we pray for in the Liturgy. The Gospel must be constantly heard and received, studied and lived by us. As God's own people, we must be continually "born from above" by the Holy Spirit Who dwells in our Church, Who bears witness to Jesus Christ our Savior by reminding us of all that He has said and done, and Who guides and confirms us into all Truth (John 15:26; 16:3-15).

An evangelizing people, therefore, must already be an evangelized people. Faithfulness to the Scripture, conviction in the Faith and participation in the life of the Church are essential. As an evangelized people, we must hear the Gospel and live it by our responding to God's presence in our lives and by recognizing His image in others. Only then are we capable of proclaiming the Good News to others.

Personal Transformation

Indeed our evangelizing of others begins with self-examination and personal commitment to the Lord. This work begins with and involves ourselves — each of us — as Orthodox Christians dedicated to Christ. We must ourselves be pure in spirit, strong in faith, upright in moral lifestyle, and joyful in the sharing of our heritage of the saints in order to do this holy work. Our lives must mirror the admonition of St. Paul: *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and*

Continued on the next page.

Archpastoral Letter

Continued from page 1.

acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom. 12: 2).

Furthermore, we need to identify and sympathize with those with whom our Faith will be shared. We must become servants of all "for the sake of the Gospel." To the strong, we must become strong. To the intellectual, we must become intellectual. To the simple, we must become simple. We must hurt with those who hurt, and suffer with those who suffer. To the weak, we must become weak, that we might "win the weak." We must, as again St. Paul writes, *become all things to all men, so that by all means we might save some* (1 Cor. 9:22-23).

Like the Lord Himself, we must lovingly bear the faults of others, and be willing to give of our lives, to bear fruit (John 12:24). We must be prepared to *share with all not only the Gospel of God, but also our own selves* (1 Thess. 2: 8). We must proclaim to others that *what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake, and that we seek not what is yours, but you* (2 Cor. 4:5; 12:14).

Parish Renewal

Not only must each of us be properly disposed and prepared for this holy work, but so too must our parishes. They must embrace wholeheartedly this effort of evangelization as a *labor of love* (1 Thess. 1:3, Heb. 6:10), be willing to engage in it seriously and, most importantly, be "open" to receive others into our communities. Indeed, when those who seek the Lord and His Church come to our parishes, they must find in them outstretched arms and loving hearts of welcome.

We cannot maintain the long-held elitist attitude that our parishes are for "our people" only. We must actualize the Great Commission of Christ in our local churches. We must be willing to do whatever it takes to make our parish churches instruments to bring others to Christ. That may mean sharing time and talent and treasure for this effort — hosting "open houses" to introduce others to our Church, providing a substantive library where others can learn about our Faith,

holding social events that will enable potential new members to meet and get to know our parish family, and even waiving the requirement of "back dues" for those who might return "home" to our churches after years of being away.

Also and importantly, our parishes cannot be filled with grudges, hurts, anger or criticism. They cannot be havens for gossip or ridicule, criticism or chronic complaining, backstabbing or the like. Our parish life must be a replication of the Kingdom of God here on earth, an example of the Church Militant that truly mirrors the Church Triumphant. Only to such a spiritual home will others be truly drawn. Our parishes must see themselves as *God's co-workers* (1 Cor. 3: 9) who are committed to *working together with Him* (2 Cor. 6: 1) as *good stewards of God's varied grace* (1 Peter 4:10).

Reaching Out To Converts

It is, of course, God who calls and converts, but we must become His *earthen vessels* (2 Cor. 4: 7), cooperating with Him and allowing His presence to be formed and molded in us for this holy work. One might ask, Whom do we seek in this effort? Is anyone really out there? It is a fact that more than half of the people in this country are unchurched. That means they have no active religious affiliation. Curiously, many unchurched people claim to believe in God and consider themselves to be "essentially religious." These individuals, who have no church, no living relationship with Christ, must be evangelized, regardless of their former affiliations.

Who are these people? Some of them are our neighbors; others are our co-workers; some of them are our friends; and yes, some of them are members of our own family! We need to invite them to our Church — to worship with us, to learn about the Faith with us . . . and perhaps, with proper instruction, to join us in the Holy Mysteries that sustain and strengthen us. We need to witness to them what the Lord has done for us in our lives; how much we love our Faith and its traditions; how rich we are because of the life-giving Mysteries of our Orthodox Church.

We need to give testimony to them that ours is the True Church from Apostolic times, ours is the True Faith of the one, undivided ancient Christian Church. This is the command of the Lord Himself Who said: *You shall be My witnesses . . . to the very ends of the earth* (Acts 1: 8).

Recovering The Lost Sheep

There are many nominal Orthodox Christians who participate minimally in the life of the Faith community and many who have simply fallen away completely. They need to be reached with the Good News. They need to be invited to take a closer look at the Faith. They need to be reincorporated into the Church's life of prayer and fellowship.

These are the strayed and the lost sheep of the fold, about whom the Good Shepherd, Christ Himself said, *I lay down my life for the sheep* (John 10:15). In many instances, inactive, former Church members are the most receptive to renewing their spiritual ties. But we must go out and encourage them to come back home. We must do the work of the Good Shepherd and go after the lost sheep. Jesus challenges us, *What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one who that is straying?* (Matt. 18:12).

Who are these people? Once again, they are people all around us. They used to come to Church with us, stand in the pew next to us, sing with us in the choir. In so many cases, they are the members of our very own families; they are our friends. We need not go far to find them; we need rather to work hard to regain them, for Christ and His Holy Church. In some cases, efforts have already been made and proven fruitless; perhaps, in those instances, asking another family member or a common friend to step in and try would be the better thing. Recovering the lost sheep is a "team effort," as is all of the work of evangelization.

Maintaining Members

Once we bring others to our churches, or back home to our parishes, we need to work at keeping them in the fold. And not only them, but those who already

belong to the Church. All of us are in constant need of continuing self-evangelization. We cannot simply bring someone to our church, "drop them off" so to speak, and leave them. This is not how St. Paul evangelized the world of the first century. After he planted Churches and converted Christians in his missionary journeys, he would retrace his steps and visit those fledgling Churches and newly-evangelized Christians. He kept contact with them in person or by letter or through his assistants, Timothy and Titus and others. He never left His spiritual children alone, within the grasp of the evil one.

We too must not fail to "follow through" with the good work begun in evangelizing others. We must be sure to maintain the membership of our parish family, keeping them safely in the loving embrace of our Holy Mother Church. This is why we have spiritual retreats, lectures and seminars, conferences and encounters, on the parish, the diocesan and the metropolitan Church levels. These are sponsored to ensure our ongoing spiritual growth; to renew our commitment to Jesus Christ, while perfecting our conviction in the Faith; and to strengthen ourselves to continue the work of the Lord and His Church.

Caring for the active membership of our parishes is indeed part of the work of evangelization. It is the strengthening of the faith of our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is an imitation of the tireless labors of Saint Paul. Most importantly,

it is the work of the "building up of the Body of Christ in love" (Ephes. 4:16).

Our Lofty Goal

As we embark on this Year of Evangelistic Outreach, we have in mind what is in fact a long-range goal. It is the goal set for us by Christ Himself in His Great Commission; it is the goal of the Church from the very day of her birth on Pentecost Sunday, the goal handed down to us by such missionaries as St. Nina of Georgia, SS. Cyril and Methodius, and St. Cosmas Aitolos; it is the very goal of the hallowed founders of our Church here in this land, St. Herman of Alaska, St. Innocent, and Patriarch St. Tikhon; it is the goal of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America since her inception nearly 30 years ago: **to make America Orthodox.**

In the short-term, the achievement of that lofty goal will begin, of course, with single steps taken by each of us in this coming year. Each of you is encouraged to bring one new soul to Christ and His Church or to bring one inactive member of the Faith back home. Our short-term goal for all of us is simply this: *Each one, reach one; each one, touch one.* All our faithful are encouraged to participate in this sacred apostolate — of inviting others to worship with us, to learn about our Faith with us and, after proper instruction, to join us in the Holy Mysteries. All of you are asked to welcome these members to our Family in Christ with the love of the Lord and the joy of the

Good Shepherd.

A final thought: do not become discouraged in this **labor of love**. We need to be reminded that our job is to sow and to keep sowing. The one who gives growth to the seed is God. If we sow faithfully, God will give the growth according to His time schedule, not ours.

We must not jump to the conclusion that nothing has been accomplished if we do not see immediate results. We must pray constantly that God will continue to prepare the soil of America into which we shall sow the seed, making it receptive, and that He will give growth to the seed once it is sown. We must not forget the words of St. Paul: *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So neither he who plants, nor he who waters, is anything, but only God Who gives the growth . . . For we are fellow workers for God; you are God's field, God's building (2 Cor. 3: 6-9).*

And so, as we commit ourselves to the work of Evangelistic Outreach in this year just before the Millennium, we pray to Christ, "O Lord, make us instruments of Your grace and help us to make America Orthodox Christian." In this and in all our efforts, to Him be the glory!

With love in the Lord of Heaven and earth and with my archpastoral blessings,

+ Herman

+HERMAN,
Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania

The Society of the Friends of St. Tikhon's Executive Board Wishes Each One and Everyone a Most Blessed Christmas Season and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!



Officers of the Friends of St. Tikhon's



Spiritual Advisor,
V. Rev. Daniel K. Donlick

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Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

Volume XIV Number 3 Winter 1998
The Official Magazine of the
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Orthodox Church in America

In This Issue

Archpastoral Letter: 1999 — Year of Evangelistic Outreach	1
Christmas Message of His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN	5
Archbishop HERMAN Honored by Grateful Diocese on Anniversary "First and Foremost a Servant of Christ"	6
"We Love Because He First Loved Us" — Sermon for St. John ..	8
Metropolitan's Banquet Address Honoring our Archbishop	9
Jesus the Messiah: the Fulfillment of the Old Covenant	10
Thirty-Fifth Diocesan Assembly Held in Old Forge	15
Silver Anniversary at St. Herman's in Shillington	17
God Became Human That We Might Be Made Gods	20
St. Mark's Church, Wrightstown, Celebrates 25th Anniversary	23
Mission, Evangelism, Growth — Fr. John Reeves	25
St. Herman's Church in Gradyville Marks Anniversary	29
The Sobering Facts — Fr. Michael Dahulich	31
Christ the Saviour Celebrates 35 Years of Service to our Lord	37
An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith (part 3)	40
What Made Me Become a Christian	44
St. Tikhon's Seminary Joyfully Celebrates 60th Anniversary	47
The Pastor: Call and Response	51
Tippy Number Two.....	55
A Life of St. John Chrysostom	57
The Four New Years: A Conversation With Fr. Athanasius	60
Presentation for Parish Councils Guidelines (conclusion)	62

Departments

Official	39
Daily Devotions	46
Education Bulletin	55
Christmas Listings	66
All in the Diocesan Family	72



Silver Anniversary -- see page 6



Seminary Marks 60 Years -- see page 47

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Your Diocese Alive

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Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

When the times were fulfilled, our Lord Jesus Christ "was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16) from the Most Pure Virgin Mary. He brought the world the plenitude of Divine Grace and granted men "the power to become sons of God" (Jn. 1:12), confirmed them in good and truth and gave them the possibility to enter the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

The Nativity of Christ was the beginning of the world's renewal, the beginning of the new grace-filled communion with God. It gave us "everlasting consolation and good hope through grace" (2 Thess. 2:16). The Lord, Who was born, showed us the purpose and meaning of life, for He is "the Truth and the Life," He is "the Way" of our salvation (Jn. 14:6).

The Word of the Father came down to Earth, that is, It came to us. Christ drew near to every man. Now each one of us can see His Most Pure Image, hear His marvelous words written down in the Holy Gospel and the Epistles of the Holy Apostles, participate in the celebration of the Bloodless Sacrifice and partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.


As we celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are reminded that in His coming the Son of God manifests His great Love for us. God came to dwell in our midst, yet there was no room in the Inn of Bethlehem, nor in the hearts of many whom He came to save. But in the heart of God there was ample room for all, even the most despised of men.

Open your hearts and let the Son of God enter in to dwell in you. Receive the Body and Blood of Christ that "you may abide in Him and He may abide in you" (Jn. 14:4). Then, too, the fullness of God's greatest gift, in all its Beauty and Joy will fill your life with the promise of salvation and immortality and the inheritance of the Kingdom of God.

Beloved in the Lord, Venerable Pastors, God-loving Monks and all devout Children of our Diocesan Family, I most warmly greet you with the joy of this great Feast of Christmas and wish you, in the New Year, the help of God and His abundant mercies upon your endeavors for eternal salvation.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

With love in Christ,



+HERMAN
Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania



Archbishop Honored by Grateful Diocese For Quarter Century of Archpastoral Leadership

"First and Foremost a Servant of Christ"

A Silver Anniversary That Was Truly Golden



Archbishop Herman blesses faithful

Like the saint whose name he bears, Archbishop HERMAN is a true example of someone who is "first and foremost a servant of Christ." This basic fact has always been known to us who live within the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania; it was publicly recognized and expressed with great solemnity by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius at the Anniversary Banquet held to honor our beloved Vladyka Herman on the twenty-fifth year of his episcopacy. The reception, held at the Genetti Convention Center in Wilkes-Barre, was the climax of a week-end of liturgical celebrations for which we gathered to worship and commune at the Lord's Table but also to mark the commemoration of the many years of tireless labor this good shepherd has devoted to the vineyard of Christ, this ser-

vant who was sent to us by Christ himself.

The faithful of the diocese gathered on Friday, September 25, to attend the Vesper service at the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre, where his dedicated episcopacy began on February 10, 1973. The Vespers was presided by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, with Archpriest Joseph Martin, Dean of the Cathedral as the main celebrant and the area clergy of the diocese also serving at the Altar. The responses were sung by the Cathedral Choir under the direction of David Kessler. On Saturday, September 26, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Metropolitan Theodosius, Archbishop Herman, and Bishop Paul of the Moscow Patriarchate. They were as-

sisted by the Chancellor, Archpriest Robert Kondratich, Igumen Tikhon of the St. Tikhon's Monastery where His Eminence is Deputy Abbot, Archpriest Alexander Golubov, Dean of St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary, Archpriest John Kowalczyk, Diocesan Secretary-Treasurer, and many other clergy from throughout the diocese and the O.C.A. The inspiring choir for the Liturgy was a gathering of many voices from throughout the diocese under the very capable direction of Archpriest Daniel Kovalak. Special guests in attendance were the Most Reverend John Dougherty, Auxiliary Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Scranton, and Archbishop Michael Dudick, retired, of the Byzantine Rite Catholic Churches. The church was filled with hundreds of faith-

ful Orthodox Christians and many others who had come to pay tribute to our Archbishop Herman.

At the Grand Banquet the Metropolitan expressed the feelings of all those who know our beloved Vladyka Herman. (Please see his remarks, which are included with this article.) Bishop John Dougherty spoke also of Archbishop Herman's commitment to the cause of the sanctity of human life. Thanking the Archbishop for his many years of friendship to the local Roman Catholic Diocese, he called him a true friend to the unborn and to all who seek to protect and preserve human life. The Roman prelate also paid tribute to His Eminence for having such beautiful, inspiring services, saying, "You people really do it right." Archbishop Michael Dudick added that "it was no wonder the representatives of Prince Vladimir could not tell if they were in heaven or on earth when attending a Divine Liturgy if it sounded like this one."

Archpriest Robert Kondratik, O.C.A. Chancellor, served as toastmaster for the affair and offered his words of praise for Archbishop Herman as well. A monetary gift was presented by Archpriest John Kowalczyk on behalf of the Diocese of Eastern Pa. Other presentations were made by several churches and organizations which are under His Eminence's spiritual care and guidance or with which he works, among them the Monastery of St. Tikhon, the Faculty and Board of Trustees of St. Tikhon's Seminary, the Century Club, the FOCA, and Holoviak's Religious Goods Store.

In true Archbishop Herman fashion, when the time came for him to respond to all the words of adoration and praise offered by so many of the guests, he took no credit for himself. Instead, he pointed to all the people in his life who had been there when he needed to get things done. He remembered how helpful his own family was to him as he grew up near Pittsburgh. He gave credit to the education he received, both from Robert Morris College and St. Tikhon's Seminary. He then went on to include the many people of the Diocese who were always there to be of assistance when he called on them. Ever concerned about the feelings of others, he said he knew that he would not be able to remember everyone by name who had been of assistance

to him in one way or another throughout his career, but that before God, where it truly mattered, they would always be remembered. Then, as he concluded his

Christian. If that is the case, then there can be no doubt about our Beloved Vladyka, he truly is, first, last, and always, a man of Christ, a true Christian

In true Archbishop Herman fashion, when the time came for him to respond to all the words of adoration and praise offered by so many of the guests, he took no credit for himself. Instead, he pointed to all the people in his life who had been there when he needed to get things done.

remarks, we saw another trademark of the Archbishop as his remarks turned into a sermon on doing the work of the Lord no matter where we are in life, knowing that it is only when we fulfill His will in our life that we are truly able to be called

in every sense of the word.

May God continue to Grant him many, many years as our Shepherd in Christ!

—Priest David Mahaffey
Continued on the next page.



Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Wilkes-Barre



Small Entrance

"We Love Because He First Loved Us"

Sermon for the Feast of the Repose of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John.

Given by Metropolitan THEODOSIUS Sept. 26, 1998, at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Archbishop Herman's Elevation to the Episcopacy.

I believe that no one could dispute the fact that one of the characteristics which substantiates our humanity is the capacity to love. To be a human being is to love. To be a human being is to also be able to receive love.

In our culture, driven at times by a philosophy of individualism, the human person finds himself alone and alienated. This alienation extends from within the self and leaves one in a state of disharmony — in a state of schism with the other. The cause of this break in com-

munion affects all of us. No one who is truly honest with himself can deny this. Yet at the same time that we identify the schism that exists within ourselves we discover a yearning to embrace, and to be embraced by the other. And it is within this yearning which engages us in the spiritual struggle to love that we recognize that we are recipients of God's Divine love.

To begin understanding that we love because God loved us first, requires us to allow divine love to enter into our existence. To receive God's love requires us to move out of our self-imposed exile of loneliness, despair and ultimately death and to approach the One who is love (1 Jn. 4:8). Yet it is here at this critical point that we must decide to accept the divine overture of love or to reject it. Clearly the choice is ours. Yet if we do

choose to be embraced by divine love we commit ourselves to a relationship that will neither tolerate nor sustain the *status quo* of our lives.

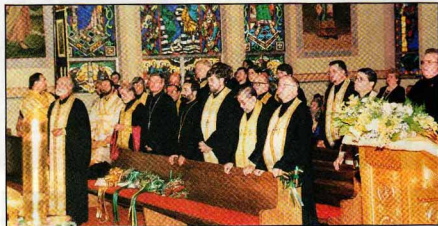
To receive the One who is love places us in the dynamic of repentance. The overture of divine love awakens us to the reality of sin which is at work within our lives. By awakening to this reality there is the impulse — sometimes momentary, sometimes lengthy — to flee from the divine love. This is so because God's overture of love can be initially perceived as an intrusion upon the *status quo* of our lives. Thus, rather than receiving the One who is life — the One who is love — we prefer to remain separated and alone in our sin.

The overture of divine love brings us to repentance. By receiving this love we begin to experience a liberation from sin. We begin to move away from that frenzied state of self-survival that has deluded us into thinking that we can maintain our humanity apart from God — that we can indeed be good without God.

By receiving divine love — by entering the dynamic of repentance — we find ourselves and we find those around us. In this awakening, in this discovery of the self and the other, we move in the direction of establishing relationships. No longer exiled, we seek communion. We seek to gaze in the eyes of another who is created in the image and likeness of God.

Our lesson from Saint John compels us to draw near to the One who is love. He teaches us that fidelity to this ever growing love requires repentance and the desire to reject and expose every falsehood that binds us to the darkness of loneliness and death.

Now we are called to receive the overture of divine love. Together may we embrace it so that we may be given the possibility to embrace one other. In this embrace we find God's Kingdom. In this embrace we come to know the purpose and goal of human existence — to love one another with the divine gift of love given to us for our salvation. Amen!



Diocesan and visiting clergy



John Zoranski offers toast to Archbishop

Metropolitan's Address Honoring Archbishop HERMAN

Given at Grand Banquet, September 26, 1998

Words cannot adequately express how thankful I am to Almighty God for having the privilege to speak at this anniversary banquet. I have no doubt that I stand in the company of those who have not only the highest regard for you, but who indeed love you as their bishop — as their Archpastor.

Over the past twenty-five years Your Eminence has been able, by the grace of our Lord, to create a ministry that impacts virtually every facet of Church life in America. I believe that this has been possible because you see yourself first and foremost as a servant of Christ. This in itself speaks volumes to all who yearn for, as well as to all who have been entrusted to care for, the building up of the Church in America. Your episcopal ministry, rooted in the humble Christ, has certainly been a model and source of strength to my own ministry as primate

of our autocephalous Church in America.

As a man who shuns pretense you have always been able to be direct and loving to the clergy and laity of your diocese. Your forthrightness has earned you the respect of all who have sought you out as bishop, as deputy abbot of Saint Tikhon's Monastery, as professor, as friend and as confidant. Even those who would disagree with Your Eminence appreciate knowing that when they speak to you they speak to a man who uses his words to express exactly what he means. We are all grateful for the candor since there are many whose words are used to conceal precisely what they are thinking.

Overseeing your diocese as a humble pastor, Your Eminence continues to proclaim the Gospel not only in word, but also in deed. Your hospitality and your charity are virtues that are difficult to match. Students and clergy, faithful men, women and children, those seeking a

kind word and a sign of love have never left your presence feeling dissatisfied or patronized. Because of your humility you are able to welcome others into your heart. From the heart you minister to all. And upon the hearts of those to whom you minister are inscribed the life-giving and life-saving words of the Gospel. No one is ever looked. From the unborn child to the elderly, Your Eminence has made your life's work to draw them into your heart.

Dear Vladyka, I have only touched upon the most obvious characteristics of your episcopal ministry. I am sure that what I have said is by no means a secret or surprise. Yet here let me state for myself how much I value your gifts as archpastor, administrator and most of all as a friend. In a time when there is so much confusion and uncertainty within American Orthodoxy you have been for me a beacon of stability, fortitude, and courage. For that I am most grateful to the living God. For this I continue to pray to the Holy Trinity that you will be granted all that is needed to cultivate the vineyard of Christ so others may enter and enjoy its regenerating fruits.

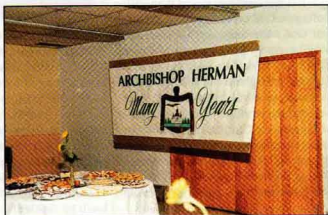
Dear brother and Concelebrant at the Lord's table, your episcopal ministry encourages all of us, and challenges us to remain ever faithful to the Gospel in a culture — in a world — that is always changing. I will continue to seek your counsel and your brotherly embrace. With your entire flock I pray that the Lord God will remember in His Kingdom your episcopal ministry always, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Eis polla etii despota!*



Peter Holoviak of Holoviak's Church Supply presents miter to Archbishop Herman



Silver Anniversary Banquet



Jesus the Messiah

The Fulfillment of the Old Covenant

The Old Testament opens with the story of God's creation of the heavens and the earth, conveying to us the revealed truth that God created the world, and "very good," for his own pleasure in order to manifest his glory and receive proper worship in return. God calls all things into being with the voice of his word, as a king might decree his law by which all things are done. God rules over the world that he has made, providentially providing for the needs of all of its creatures, and so ensures a world that is beautiful, orderly, and pure — truly a paradise! Human beings were given a unique place in God's creation, being endowed with God's "image and likeness," so as to exercise dominion over the earth, ruling it in God's name and on his behalf. But the first humans failed to remain obedient to God, and as a result of their rebellion against God's sovereign authority fell into a corrupted state of sin. This fall occurred because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in eating the fruit of the "Tree of Knowledge" that they had been forbidden to eat. In response to their rebellion, and their subsequent failure to repent, God renders judgment which brings to an end the idyllic life in paradise. The increase of human wickedness then prompted God to destroy the human race, with the exception of Noah and his family, by means of a "great flood."

It is this opening story of the creation of a paradisaal world filled with the grace of God's blessings, and its subsequent defilement by the arrogance of humans desiring "to be like gods" in rebellion against the rightful rule of God, that necessitates a divine plan for the restoration of the world to its original state of blessedness. The historical drama of God's redemption of what has become a "lost world" — "lost" in the sense of being alienated from God and subjected to the rule of sin because of the willful self-centeredness of human beings —



unfolds in a series of covenants between God and the human race, beginning with God's promise to never again destroy the human race by a flood. A "covenant history" then emerges between God and his chosen people, Israel. God elects Abraham, who is characterized as a proverbial "man of faith," as one who shall enjoy God's unique favor, promising Abraham that his descendants, who shall be as numerous as the sands of seashore, will be God's chosen people who shall

inherit a "Promised Land," a land flowing with milk and honey, a "new Eden." Later, after the children of Abraham have indeed become a great nation and have been delivered by God from bondage in Egypt, God delivers his holy *Torah* (Hebrew, "Law") to Moses — a Law through which the Israelites shall indeed live under the rule of God, and thus enjoy the favor and blessings of God, in the new paradise that has been promised to them. Finally, God anoints David as his vice-

roy, a king who shall implement the observance of God's Law in a state that is literally the "Kingdom of God" because it is ruled by the Law of God. In return for the building of a "house" (that is, a Temple) for God where God shall receive the proper sacrifices and "whole-burnt" offerings, God promises David a house that shall last "forever," a promise that can only be realized with the coming of the *Messiah* (Hebrew, "the anointed"). The Messiah is necessary for the keeping of this promise, the promise of a God who is steadfastly true to his word, because Israel violated the terms of its covenant with God by worshipping foreign idols, culminating in the "unpardonable" sin of King Manasseh, the longest reigning king of the House of David. Hence the covenant is revoked by God, and the king, Jehoiachin, along with all of the rulers of the people, were exiled from Jerusalem by the Babylonians, who served as God's dreadful instrument of chastisement. During their time of exile, the Jews were comforted by the hope of a future restoration of the covenant, realizing that their current sorrow and lamentation shall be overcome by great joy on the "Day of the Lord," when the Messiah will redeem both Israel and "the nations," extend the "Kingdom of God" over the whole world, and reign forever in justice and peace.

The long-standing mercy and patience of God, even in the face of a dreadful chastisement, whereby God moved his people to repentance by depriving them of all of his covenanted blessings, is proven by this hope, that for the sake of a remnant that remained righteous while in exile, God would forgive the transgressions of his people, and through them the transgressions of the whole world, and remove their iniquity: *O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like the mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you!* (Isaiah 44:21-22). This hope of future redemption gave comfort to an exiled people; God would send them a Messiah who would establish the everlasting Kingdom of God, a kingdom of a covenant of peace, a new garden of Eden; *for the Lord will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places and will*

make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like a garden of the Lord—joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song! (Isaiah 51:3). Thus the people would be released from their captivity in Babylon and be restored to Jerusalem (Isaiah 49: 8-26). In this everlasting Kingdom of God, ruled by God himself as King (Isaiah 51:17-52:12), God shall *do good to Zion . . . and then the people shall rebuild the walls of Jerusalem . . . ; only then shall God delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar* (Psalm 51:18-19). The nations shall be converted, *for the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant; these shall I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer . . . and in the restored Temple of God their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples* (Isaiah 56:6-7). Kindness and justice shall rule the earth (Isaiah 58:1-14), and God shall *create new heavens and a new earth* (Isaiah 65:17) that are transformed in God's glory. In conclusion, in her restored glory, the "New Israel" will be paradise on earth, with a people forever filled with the sanctifying grace of God.

The instrument of God's everlasting redemption of Israel, which would also include the converted people of all nations, is the Messiah ("the Anointed"). This term has both priestly and royal connotations: the priests of Israel were God's anointed, for the unity of the worshipping people of God is like *precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron* (Psalm 133:2) to the priests of Israel; likewise were Israel's kings, for God has set *the king on Zion, my holy hill . . . and to the king God has said you are my son; today I have begotten you* (Psalm 2:6-7). The Messiah was thus understood as a king, ruling on God's behalf as God's Son, chosen by God as surpassing even King David, who would be *a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek* (Psalm 110:4). The Messiah's royal and

priestly authority in the restored Kingdom of God would extend into the future without end, as the *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace* (Isaiah 9:6); his *authority shall grow continually and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom . . . he will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness for this time onward and forevermore* (Isaiah 9:7). The royal authority of the Messiah surpasses that of any ordinary king in that he shall be his own wise counselor, personifying in himself the wisemen and ministers that would surround the throne of ancient kings; and by his own wisdom—greater even than that with which God blessed Solomon—the Messiah will reign with perpetual peace on earth. Furthermore, surpassing the wise Solomon, the Messiah shall not only rebuild the Temple, but is himself the High Priest of God's temple that is heaven and earth itself, and his throne is none other than the lofty throne of the Mighty God and Everlasting Father himself, for which he offers to God the offerings of justice and righteousness.

The Messiah, who is God's agent on earth to crush the forces of evil on the "great and terrible day of the Lord," is more than even just an extraordinary human savior-king and priest. The Messiah is the "Son of Man" (Psalm 8:4), a supernatural "sun of righteousness" who shall come from heaven like the rising of the sun in order to judge the earth. *See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all evildoers shall be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall, and you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts* (Malachi 4:1-3). God shall descend from his heavenly throne with the vesture of light and supersensible fire of divine power, an *Ancient One whose clothing was white as snow . . . his throne [i.e., his chariot] was fiery flames and its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and*

Continued on the next page.

Jesus the Messiah

Continued from page 11.

flowed out in his presence, and a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment and the books were opened (Daniel 7:9-10). But the Messiah, who is *one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven* (Daniel 7:13) shall come before God and present himself, and to him was given *dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed* (Daniel 17:14). Clearly the one who is "Ancient of Days" is a reference to God, who like the "sun of righteousness" comes to judge the earth; yet distinguished from him who so acts is the "Son of Man," who descends from heaven to be given the everlasting dominion of the Kingdom of God. It seems as though there are two figures, the God who judges and the Messiah who rules; however, there can be no question that it is the Messiah who is the "sun of righteousness" through whom God judges and rules the earth; this reading is one that is consistent with the earlier messianic prophecies of Isaiah. Therefore, the only possible resolution is to consider the Messiah as both a "heavenly human being," the Son of Man, and as a "divine judge," the Ancient of Days who is the Lord God of hosts. In a manner similar to the Messiah being understood as both king and high priest, so also the Messiah is both God and a human being — the *theanthropic* ("divine-human") savior-king who establishes and rules the Kingdom of God.

The Messiah, the divine-human Son of Man, is the "Wonderful Counselor" in whom is incarnated the Wisdom of God itself, by which he shall save the world (Wisdom 9:18). He is a divine being who has come down from heaven in glory; he is the Word of God, for God's word is always wise, and it is the wise command of God that created and rules the world: *O God of my ancestors and Lord of mercy, who have made all things by your word, and by your wisdom have formed humankind to have dominion over the creatures you have made and*

rule the world in holiness and righteousness (Wisdom 9:1-2) . . . *O Lord how manifold are your works, in wisdom you have made them all* (Psalm 104:24) . . . *The Lord by wisdom founded the earth: by understanding he established the heavens* (Proverbs 3:19). In Old Testament times God's word was specifically understood in the context of God's *Torah*, the agent of God's will that commands the very world into being at the voice of God's word and is the medium of God's communication with the patriarchs and prophets of Israel. By the time of the Davidic monarchy, and certainly in the pronouncements of the "Word of the Lord" by the Word of Israel's prophets, God was clearly given a substantial reality; in other words, the very presence of the Law, and of the "Word of the Lord," was indicative of God's living presence itself — it was no mere coincidence that the Temple's Holy of Holies, which housed the Ark of the Covenant (containing the tablets of the Law), was considered to be the very throne of God, with the Ark as God's "footstool," upon which God metaphorically "sat" (i.e., that God was truly a living presence "sitting" on his throne). Of course, God commands his Law, a Law that is supremely just and righteous, wisely — and so the observance of God's commandments is the mark of the wise man. The Messiah, the Wonderful Counselor, is precisely the wise savior-king who rules the Kingdom of God with supreme justice and righteousness that perfectly keeps God's Law. Furthermore, according to the ancient Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria, the *Logos* (Greek, "Word" or "Reason"), which he identified with the Word of God, is the divine "prototype" from which creation was "copied," the agent of God's creative power. Thus the *Logos*, which is Reason itself, must be understood as a "rational" Word or as a "wise" Word; hence clearly identified with the Wisdom of God. Accordingly, the *Logos* is God's "first-born son," a title that is explicitly messianic; he is God's "image" and "ambassador," a viceroy to exercise dominion of God's Kingdom. The *Logos* is also humanity's "advocate" before God, a "high priest" who intercedes with God by offering to him due adoration and the "offerings" of

justice and righteousness (cf. *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. E. Yonge). This view of the Messiah as a divine redeemer, of course, was to achieve its full recognition in the New Testament — the "Good News" of Jesus the Messiah. However, the Messiah was not only the "object" of Old Testamental prophecies, but was also regarded as a prophesying "subject" as well. The Messiah was explicitly believed to be the future "greatest" of Israel's prophets, for the prophets, were also anointed figures. In I Kings 19:16 Elijah, the archetypal prophet, is told to anoint not only the kings of Syria and Israel, but also his own successor prophet, Elisha. In Deuteronomy 18:15-19 God promises that he shall raise up a prophet for Israel who will prepare the people for final judgment: *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like you* [a reference to Moses, to whom God is speaking] . . . *who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable*. Therefore, the Messiah is both the "Word" or Wisdom that is spoken, and the prophetic "speaker" of the selfsame "word," who then rules the Kingdom in accordance with the wise words of God's commandments. In conclusion, the Messiah is the prototypical exemplar of the whole revelation of the Old Testament, the sum of Israel's kings, priests, prophets and wisemen — Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, and Elijah. Nevertheless, he surpasses and transcends them all in that he is their perfect fulfillment, a divine "heavenly man" who has come down to judge and rule the world with supreme justice and righteousness in an everlasting messianic kingdom which is the "Kingdom of God" precisely because it is King, the Messiah, is a divine person.

The New Testament, in the Gospels and in the Pauline epistles, tells of the story of Jesus the Messiah, in whom is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Law and Prophets. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is depicted as the suffering "Son of God," who uses the power of God's Spirit to overcome his adversaries and the power of suffering to transform his disciples into true followers. The resurrection of Jesus confirms this divine

power in anticipation of the Kingdom of God. In this designation as "Son of God," Jesus is the "royal" Messiah, but as a "King of kings" who establishes the Kingdom of God by the power of suffering, and so acts as the "High Priest" who offers himself as the sacrificial "Lamb of God." In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus is a "new Moses," a new law-giver who commands higher standards of righteousness, which are ultimately exemplified in his own obedience unto death on the Cross. His disciples are to follow his obedient example by rendering obedient service unto God through deeds of love in the community of discipleship. In response to Jesus' obedience, God raises him from the dead. Thus, Jesus is both prophet and king; he prophetically speaks the "Word of the Lord" that is the Law, and he gives the Law as the prince of peace who rules the Kingdom (that is, the community of discipleship), with justice and holiness.

The Gospel of Luke considers Jesus as the ideal exemplar of the lowly and oppressed masses of humanity, of the "New Israel." Jesus' ministry consists of gathering witnesses to his message of God's forgiveness and human repentance, which culminates with his unjust death on the Cross. Because Jesus represents all oppressed people in his humiliating death, all oppressed people are thereby exalted with him in his resurrection. Consequently, Luke regards Jesus as a corporate entity, the exemplar of "Israel" itself; he is himself the "covenant" between God and Israel, and in his humiliation he bears the wrath of the "nations" upon himself like the sacrificial scapegoat that is the very corporate symbol of Israel. He is another "Isaac," who by his being "bound" on the Cross serves as the very instrument that confirms the "new covenant" between God and His people. God will remember him, and through him "Israel," exalting him and "Israel" above all the rich and mighty of the earth, who shall be cast down from their thrones of worldly power.

The Gospel of John explicitly affirms the full divinity of Jesus Christ, who is the incarnate *Logos* of God, and the true Light come into a world mired in darkness. Jesus' public ministry is the revelation of his glory to the world, which

was blind to his glory, and his passion and death reveal his ultimate glorification to his community of disciples, so that they, in the words of the Apostle Thomas, might confess him as "Lord and God" (John 20:28) and be united to God and to each other in love through the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the eternal, personal, and divine *Logos*, the "word of the Lord" who is God's agent in creation, and the living "Light" that shines the light of wisdom into a world "darkened" in ignorance. As the divine Light come into the world, he serves as beacon for all the children of the light whom God has chosen and given to him. He is the wonderful counselor who teaches wisdom to the wise, showing his disciples the way of deeper fellowship between his glorified self and the believers, which is confirmed in his sending of the Spirit. He is also the high priest whose prayer of consecration (John 17:1-26) announces the hour of his perfect obedience has come, by which he shall secure "eternal life" for all who know him as God's only-begotten Son. He prays for the unity of his disciples, that they may be one even as he and the Father are one, that they may have joy and be victorious over the "evil one" who rules this present age — overthrowing this age in expectation of the age to come in which the dominion of God shall rule over a world of light and glory, the "new heaven and earth" of the messianic kingdom. Jesus Christ is always the "Exalted One," whose resurrection from the dead does not add anything to him; rather, it simply manifests his glory to the world, which failed to recognize his glory until the hour of his glorification on the Cross, so that those who come to understand what they have witnessed on the Cross may then be united to God through love.

In his epistles, particularly in the epistle to the Romans, Paul taught the primacy of the believer's faith in Jesus, by which the believer receives justification before a righteous and holy God. Jesus had offered his own life as a ransom for the human race, "buying" it back from sin and death with the price of his own blood, thereby offering deliverance to the entire human race. But the apportioning of the benefits of redemption to the individual believer is effected by the

believer's faith in Jesus, and by the grace of God the believer becomes filled with the Spirit and receives a new life of holiness. The Jesus that is portrayed by Paul is the messianic king, whose own righteousness is bestowed by his *charis* (Greek, "showing favor" or grace) to believers, thus transforming them from sinners into "the just." Jesus is, furthermore, the ultimate "High Priest" of the Kingdom, who offers himself for the atonement of the entire world, cleansing its sin with the "water" of his blood; baptism, therefore, is a washing in the sacrificial "blood" of Christ's righteousness, offered for the life of the world, by means of faith in the risen Lord Jesus. Finally Jesus is the culmination of the prophets, for the "word of the Lord" that he announces is his own "good news" of resurrection — he is the "wonderful counselor" of the wisdom that is faith in him!

In the end, Paul calls upon all to be like the forefather of Israel, Abraham: *Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness* (Romans 4:3). Faith not works, is "true righteousness." Faith confers the gift of God's forgiveness, offering "justification" to the sinner redeemed by his faith in God's love and mercy. Jesus Christ manifests this love and mercy of God, offering new life to the world by liberating the faithful from the bondage of sin. Through the grace of Jesus Christ, believers are no longer subject to a Law that is impossible to obey, but rather are filled with the Spirit of Christ that consecrates them to God. God has honored his promises to Abraham by choosing anyone that he so pleases to be inheritors of his covenant with Abraham, and it pleases God to freely offer grace and righteousness to all believers. In conclusion, Jesus' messianic ministry is the making of sinners righteous before God; he alone possesses the power to freely bestow his righteousness as he so chooses, and those who are chosen are saved by the generosity of God's favor. The proper human response, therefore, is to trust in all that God has done through Jesus Christ, a trust that is expressed in the life of the community's love.

The Orthodox Church's dogma, founded on its revealed faith in the scrip-

Continued on the next page.

Jesus the Messiah

Continued from page 13.

tures, expresses its belief that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel, of the hope in the coming of the Messiah who would establish a kingdom that shall never end. For Christian believers, Jesus Christ is both truly divine and truly human, possessing both divinity and humanity as two natures united in his one person without confusion, change, separation, or division (cf. the definition of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon). He also possesses two wills that are "conformed" to one another in his submission to the will of God — an obedience of will that is supremely exemplified by his innocent suffering on the Cross in order to save humankind. As our messianic deliverer, Jesus Christ exercises three offices: the royal, the

priestly, and the prophetic. In his royal office as the messianic king Jesus Christ legislates obedience to God's commandments in imitation of his own perfect obedience, and he judges both the living and the dead accordingly. In his priestly office as the messianic high priest, Jesus Christ sacrifices himself on the Cross as a proper and true offering to God — he is the unblemished "Lamb of God" suffering for the sins of the world in order to reconcile humanity with God. In his prophetic office as the messianic prophet of wisdom, Jesus Christ teaches the human race the wisdom of true faith, revealing to the world God's truth and also setting the example in his own life of responding to God's truth with commitment and love, which the believer need only imitate for the sake of salvation — *be of the same mind, having the same*

love, being in full accord and of one mind . . . Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:2-5). The historical Jesus, who is one and same as the "Jesus of faith," is the Messiah who has come in the fullness of time to save the world, fulfilling the Old Testament's prophecies of the future king, high priest and prophet who shall establish and rule the Kingdom of God, the perfect restoration of everlasting paradise for the faithful. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Orthodox Church is the Kingdom of God, on earth among the living faithful and in heaven among the communion of the saints, and happy are we who are called to the unending Eucharist, the messianic banquet of Jesus the Messiah!

—Priest Sophrony Royer
*Instructor in Old Testament and
Philosophy at St. Tikhon's Seminary*

Allegorical iconic depiction of the entire spiritual situation surrounding abortion.

LEFT: Christ blesses and protects the Christian family, receives the woman who repents for abortion, and strengthens the unwed mother who although she was led astray by premarital relations, did not however resort to abortion, but took up the cross of motherhood outside of wedlock.



RIGHT: Abortion is personified as a new Queen Herodias who slaughters and tramples on unborn children offered by women who are personified by hard-heartedness, superficiality, unconcern, and the love of pleasure. A doctor committing abortion can also be seen who murders an unborn child with his pocket filled with cash.

*The Most Reverend Archbishop Herman and
Orthodox Christians for Life
Request the honour of your presence for
The Orthodox Witness on the Sanctity of Human Life at the*

1999 March for Life

Friday, January 22, 1999, 11:30 A.M.

Dignitaries on the Podium at 11:45 A.M. Program Activities Start at 12:00 noon

The Ellipse, Washington, DC

(across the street from the White House)

RSVP by January 14, 1999

Orthodox Christians for Life P.O. Box 805, Melville, NY 11747

(516) 271-4408

Thirty-Fifth Diocesan Assembly Held in Old Forge



Delegates to the Diocesan Assembly

The thirty-fifth Annual Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania was convened on Saturday, October 17, 1998 at St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Old Forge, Pennsylvania. His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN concelebrated the Divine Liturgy and Molieben along with Fr. John Kowalczyk, Secretary-Treasurer of the Diocese, Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Dean of the Frackville Deanery, Fr. Michael Lepa and Fr. David Mahaffey, host pastor. Members of St. Michael's choir and delegates joined to sing the Liturgy under the direction of Mr. Jon Black. The Assembly

sessions began at 11:30 a.m. in St. Michael's Auditorium following a continental breakfast.

The Assembly was comprised of Archbishop Herman, twenty-nine clergy delegates, thirty lay delegates, one alternate, two Diocesan Council members, six observers and Mr. Stanley Stoy, CPA. A packet containing the Agenda and various departmental reports was sent in advance to the delegates for study prior to the Assembly. After the approval of the Agenda, the Assembly officers were elected: Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Clergy Vice-Chairman, Fr. David Shewczyk, Clergy

Secretary, Mr. Peter Bohlender, Lay Vice-Chairman, and Mrs. Marie Proch, Lay Secretary.

Archbishop Herman's report highlighted the morning session. He noted the drop in Diocesan membership once again this year. Many new members were added to the membership rolls. However, the gain has been offset by the number of deaths within the parishes. He encouraged evangelization and work to convert more people to the Orthodox Faith. His Eminence offered his gratitude to the retired clergy for their assistance in service.

Continued on the next page.



Assembly opens with Service of Thanksgiving



Assembly delegates cast their votes



Primate welcomed with the traditional greeting

Silver Anniversary at St. Herman's in Shillington

During the weekend of September 26-27, there was "angelic activity" in the area of Reading, Pennsylvania. On that weekend, the community of Saint Herman's Orthodox Church in Shillington celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. Also being held during this busy September weekend was the main celebration of Reading's 250th anniversary. This local celebration included the Betsy King LPGA National Golf Tournament and the Reading Airshow, which featured the world famous U.S. Navy Blue Angels. Despite this complex local activity, the parishioners of Saint Herman's were able to celebrate their silver anniversary in grand style.

Preparations for the anniversary began two years ago, when it was decided by the community to invite our Metropolitan THEODOSIUS to serve as the main celebrant with our own Archbishop HERMAN. Immediately, a high proportion of the parishioners eagerly stepped forward to serve on various committees to ensure a successful and memorable celebration. Former Parish President Lydia Seman and her husband, John, took the reins as Anniversary cochairpersons.

The Anniversary weekend began following a yearlong celebration of many parish events and activities. These events included a few parish dinners, a golf tournament, a day at Hershey Park, a Read-

ing Phillies Baseball Game, and of course, many fundraisers. All of these parish activities helped to develop a greater sense of "family" within the community.

On Saturday, September 26, we of Saint Herman's, with our pastor, Fr. John Onofrey, welcomed His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, and Deacon John Hopko, with their entourage, for a casual family dinner in the church hall. Among the approximately fifty people in attendance at this dinner were, as guests, the members and families of the parish council and the local Orthodox clergy. It was

Continued on the next page.



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Continued on the next page.

Silver Anniversary at

St. Herman's

Continued from page 17.

a wonderful experience for those who attended to meet and speak with the Hierarchs.

Following the dinner, Great Vespers was served that evening by Fr. Onofrey, Deacon Hopko and many local Orthodox clergy. Attending the Vesper service were many guests of St. Herman's Church, including the faithful from Holy Trinity Church, Pottstown; St. Matthew's, and Ss. Constantine and Helen's Greek Orthodox Church and St. Nicholas' Patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church of Reading. Other guests included some ministers and Roman Catholic nuns from the Gov. Mifflin Ministerium, of which St. Herman's is an active member. The choir under the direction of Mrs. Vera Losk led the congregation in the singing during the service.

After Vespers, the children of the Sunday School performed a short play outlining the life and miracles of Saint Herman of Alaska. This presentation was a humble gift by the children of the parish to Archbishop Herman on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of his episcopal consecration, which was also held that weekend. After the service the Sisterhood hosted a coffee hour in the church hall so that parishioners and guests could

meet one another and share in Christian fellowship.

The main celebration of the Anniversary took place on Sunday, the Lord's Day. It began with a procession from the

In church, the Hierarchs were welcomed to Saint Herman's by Fr. Onofrey, clergy and faithful, with the presentation of the cross. The traditional presentation of bread and salt was also made to His

The celebration of the Liturgy was truly glorious and inspiring, not only because of the presence of the hierarchs but because the church was filled with the joyful voices of over 175 people.

rectory to escort the Hierarchs to the church. The procession, with cross and banners, included Deacon John, subdeacons and altar boys, and the children of the Sunday School, who preceded the Bishops and sprinkled flower petals.

Beatitude by President Nicholas Sichak, and to His Eminence, by Sisterhood President Andrea Anderson. Following the entrance and vesting of the bishops, the hierarchal Divine Liturgy began.

The celebration of the Liturgy was



Deacon John Hopko prepares to chant from the Gospel



Worshippers listen to the dismissal prayers

truly glorious and inspiring, not only because of the presence of the hierarchs but because the church (which can hold approximately 125) was filled with over 175 people. The small altar was filled with the two bishops, six priests, the deacon, three subdeacons and nine altar boys. Priests serving were Fr. John Onofrey, Frackville Dean; Fr. Daniel Ressetar of Christ the Savior Church, Harrisburg; Fr. Spyridon Papademetriou, Pastor Emeritus; Fr. Dimitrios Nicoloudakis, Pastor of St. Matthew's Greek Orthodox Church, Reading; Fr. Stephen Janos, former parishioner and Chaplain of St. Cosmas & Damian Adult Home, New York; and Fr. Michael Evans of St. Michael's in Mt. Carmel. Once again the choir, under the direction of Mrs. Vera Losk, provided beautiful music for the Liturgy.

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Metropolitan and Archbishop were presented with roses by Elizabeth Yurick and Laura Wanenchak. After the veneration of the cross, there was again a fellowship hour with refreshments served.

On Sunday afternoon, while the Blue Angels soared overhead, approximately two hundred parishioners, friends and guests gathered at The Inn at Reading for the anniversary Grand Banquet. During the banquet, the guests enjoyed dinner music provided by the Reading High School Strolling Knights string ensemble. Following the dinner there was a short program of speeches. Toastmaster Henry Zerbe kept the program rolling along with his usual expertise and wit.

The keynote speaker was His Beatitude, who reminded the faithful gathered of their heritage, and the labors of the first American saints and missionaries. He commanded the community to continue this tradition and missionary zeal as the Orthodox Church prepares to enter the new millennium. His Eminence, Archbishop Herman echoed this appeal, expressing his joy for the successful and spiritual growth of St. Herman's Church and the love and dedication of the parishioners. He also challenged them to build beyond the walls of the present church.

Fr. Daniel Ressetar, the pastor of Christ the Savior Church in Harrisburg and dean of the Frackville Deanery, offered congratulations on behalf of the deanery clergy and faithful. President

Nicholas Sichak expressed his personal thanks and the Council's for the parish's success, reminding the banqueters to keep up the family spirit which has been a key element to the community's growth. Fr. John Onofrey also shared his personal thanks and joy and urged the parish faithful to follow the words of their patron, St. Herman of Alaska, to "love God above all . . ." as we continue forward for the

next twenty-five years.

Following the closing prayer, the parishioners and their guests bid farewell to Metropolitan Theodosius and Archbishop Herman, who after a long weekend had to return home. Those who remained at the banquet then enjoyed an afternoon filled with music and dancing, love and fellowship.



Faithful receive Holy Communion



Metropolitan Theodosius greets the faithful at St. Herman's



Fr. John Onofrey offers his reflections

God Became Human That We Might Be Made Gods

The Incarnation of the Word of God and the Deification of Man



In October of 1978 a small company left San Lorenzo de Campo in the north of Italy for Thessalonica in northern Greece. The members of this party included the Metropolitan of Thessalonica, Panteleimon, his Chancellor, and the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Italian province from which they were leaving. This was indeed a very low-key event. Perhaps the local newspaper had written a couple of lines in reference to it, but in any case, very few people even noticed, or much cared about, what was taking place.

The retinue quietly made its way to the harbor, whence, virtually unnoticed, they embarked upon their voyage (by sea) for Thessalonica.

The voyage itself, though uneventful, was pleasant enough. But as their ship

approached the Thessalonian harbor, a faint sound was heard emanating from it. At first it was hardly discernible from the sound of the sea, but gradually it betrayed a sense of excitement, until, as the ship drew even closer to shore, it developed into the sound of ten thousand voices singing in unison.

The Roman Catholic Bishop could hardly disguise his surprise. With raised eyebrows, he asked, Was this throng waiting to greet them?

"They have come to welcome the Saint," said one of the company. The others nodded in agreement.

"But how many must there be?" asked the Roman Catholic Bishop in disbelief. "It looks as though the whole city has come down to the harbor!"

"It seems so," said the Chancellor.

"All these people for the sake of some old bones . . . hum, I mean, for the relics of Saint Demetrius?"

"Yes," the Metropolitan replied, "the people have come to greet the Holy Relics of our beloved Saint Demetrius. It is for this that the whole city rejoices."

Needless to say, the celebration of the return of the Saint's Holy Relics took the form of church services, all-night vigils, sermons and long speeches delivered by various dignitaries, and so forth.

But why, we may well ask — together with the Roman Catholic Bishop — why so much excitement and rejoicing over a few old bones? Why do the Orthodox Christians (not only of Thessalonica, but all over the world) still venerate Holy Relics with such reverence and piety? What is it about them that the Orthodox

peoples know, which others — even fellow Christians — appear to have forgotten?

It will come as no surprise to you if I answer this question by saying that Holy Relics witness to the great sanctity of a Christian, to his or her faithfully following the commandments of Christ, to receiving His grace, and to truly becoming like Him.

But what exactly does “great sanctity” mean? Or, in other words, what kind of sanctity is it that produces Holy Relics? To what kind of person do Holy Relics bear witness? And finally, what do Holy Relics have to do with Christmas, the great mystery of the Incarnation?

In attempting to answer this question, I should like first to quote a few lines from a great saint of our own age, Saint Silouan the Athonite, because the saints have a wonderful way of cutting straight to the heart of the matter. Drawing therefore a direct connection between Holy Relics and the Love of God, Saint Silouan writes:

“Love of God takes various forms. The man who wrestles with wrong thoughts loves God according to his measure. He who struggles against sin, and asks God to give him strength not to sin, but yet falls into sin again because of his infirmity, and sorrows and repents — he possesses grace in the depths of his soul and mind, but his passions are not yet overcome. But the man who has conquered his passions now knows no conflict: all his concern is to watch himself in all things lest he fall into sin. Grace, great and perceptible, is his. But he who feels grace in both soul and body is a perfect man, and if he preserves this grace, his body is sanctified and his bones will make holy relics.”¹

There are, described in this passage, four stages of love, the fourth and highest of which is that which is attested to by the penetration of Divine Grace into the body, into the very marrow of a person’s being. And this is identified by Saint Silouan as the highest state of perfection, the highest state of holiness. “He who feels grace in both soul and body is a perfect man, and if he preserves this

grace, his body is sanctified and his bones will make holy relics.”

And we could justifiably add to Saint Silouan’s remarks here that this is in fact the whole point of the Incarnation — to save the whole human person — soul and body; to raise, that is, our fallen human nature to its intended place — at the right hand of God the Father.

Let us bring to mind Saint Athanasius the Great’s famous saying, which refers to the purpose of Christ’s coming in the flesh: “God became human that we might be made gods.”²

“God became human that we might be made gods.” In the epistle reading for the Christmas Day Liturgy, where the Apostle Paul identifies the Incarnation as “the fullness of time,” he also makes the following very important point:

“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. 4:4-7).

Thus the purpose of Christ’s redemption of mankind is “that we might receive the adoption of sons” through union with Him, for thereby we receive the Spirit, Who cries in our hearts, “Abba, Father”; and thereby we truly become “heir[s] of God through Christ.”

It is in Christ Jesus, therefore, that we not only encounter true and perfect God, but also true and perfect man. In other words, we see in Him not only the great God and Savior, but also what we have been called to become.

As Archimandrite Sophrony says in his spiritual autobiography: “Christ manifested the perfection of the Divine image in man and the possibility for our nature of assimilating the fullness of divinization to the very extent that, after His ascension, He placed our nature ‘on the right hand of the Father.’”

To this, however, he also adds: “But even in Him our nature did not become one with the essence of the uncreated God. In Christ, incarnate Son of the Fa-

ther, we contemplate God’s pre-eternal idea of man.”³

In Christ Jesus we find man’s true place, “on the right hand of the Father,” sharing in the divine life; but, as with the two natures in Christ, united without confusion; in other words, we never cease to be His creatures, for He alone is uncreated and pre-eternal.

Throughout the history of salvation — in the Old Testament as well as in the New — it was this same Son and Word of God, Who was in the beginning with the Father, Who of old revealed Himself to our spiritual forefathers. In other words, it was the pre-incarnate Word, He Who by His Incarnation became the Christ, it was He Who visited Abraham under the Oak at Mamre, it was He Who wrestled with Jacob, it was He Who spoke with Moses and the Prophets. This is He of Whom the Prophet-King David tells, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps. 110:1).

And of His coming as a man, the Prophet Isaiah speaks the well-known lines:

“... Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Angel of Great Counsel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Potentate, Prince of Peace, Father of the Age to Come.”⁴

These are the names which we use today in Great Compline during Great Lent, when we sing “For God is with us” (*oti meta emon o Theos; iako snamy Boh*); and they are the names of none other than Jesus Christ.

Just as Christ became the New Adam in order to save the whole Adam, that is to say, to save all mankind, so too do we, by becoming Christlike — through the purification of the passions and the cultivation of the virtues, by living according to the commandments of Christ — so too do we embrace, as does Christ, the whole Adam. Now what we are referring to here is not a moral or ethical state but an ontological or rather an ex-

³We Shall See Him As He Is, translated by Rosemary Edmonds (Tollshunt Knights, Essex: Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1988), p. 192.

⁴Isa. 9:6 in the Septuagint (LXX), the version used by the Church.

¹Saint Silouan the Athonite, translated by Rosemary Edmonds (Tollshunt Knights, Essex: Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1991), pp. 438-439.

²On the Incarnation, 54.

God Became Human

Continued from page 21.

periential one; and this produces in us the ability to repent in the same way as did Adam our forefather. This Adam-like repentance, moreover, gives birth to hypostatic prayer for the world.

The reason why we insist that this repentance and the prayer that springs from it are not to be understood as operating on a moral level, but rather on a hypostatic or personal one, is because our archetype is none other than the divine Person of Christ Himself, Who contains within Himself both heaven and earth — full and perfect divinity and full and perfect humanity.

Of the experience of hypostatic, personal prayer, Saint Silouan the Athonite writes: "He who has the Holy Spirit in Him, to however slight a degree, sorrows day and night for all mankind. His heart is filled with pity for all God's creatures, more especially for those who do not know God, or who resist Him and therefore are bound for the fire of torment. For them, more than for himself he prays day and night, that all may repent."⁵

The great and wonderful mystery here is that when a person reaches out and embraces the whole Adam, he finds himself, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, actually living the spiritual state or condition of the whole human race — even that of the most sinful man — and in this way such a person truly prays for his neighbor as for himself.

Hypostatic prayer — this prayer for all creation as for one's self — is at the very heart of the Divine Eucharist — the Liturgy — and can be seen very clearly both in Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition:

In the Old Testament, for instance, we find Moses imploring God to forgive the people of Israel, after falling into the grave sin of idolatry: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin, forgive; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exod. 32:32).

And in the New Testament too, Saint Paul says of his fellow Jews: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from

Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:1-3).

In Holy Tradition too, in the lives of the saints, we find exactly the same thing. As Saint Silouan says: "Christ prayed for them that were crucifying him: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke 23:34). Stephen the Martyr prayed for those who stoned him, that the Lord 'lay not this sin to their charge' (Acts 7:60). And we, if we wish to preserve grace, must pray for our enemies."⁶

Holy Relics, therefore, are the earthly remains of those who have been taught by none other than Christ Himself to love their enemies — just as He did; just as He does. Love for enemies is not, then, simply a moral injunction — it is the fundamental criterion for the Christian way of life. That is why Saint Silouan, himself possessed of this divine love, humbly warns us to be watchful:

"If you do not feel pity for the sinner destined to suffer the pains of hell-fire, it means that the grace of the Holy Spirit is not in you, but an evil spirit. While you are still alive, therefore, strive by repentance to free yourself from this spirit."⁷

It is no coincidence that the altars of the earliest churches were built over the tombs of the martyrs, that is, over their holy relics; and that the celebration of the Divine Eucharist took place over them. For, as mentioned earlier, the hypostatic or personal prayer of the saints is liturgical and eucharistic prayer, and this is so precisely because both kinds of prayer embrace the whole Adam, the whole of humankind.

We are saved, not as individuals, but as persons, as members of the Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head. We are united with Him — and through Him, with the other members of the Body.

Notice how the following words by Staretz Sophron underline the fact that the sanctification of the human body is intimately bound up with the Incarnation of Christ and the Divine Eucharist:

"Through His incarnation the everlasting Logos of the Father gives us to partake of His Blood and His Flesh in order thereby to pour into our veins His eternal Life, that we may become His chil-

dren, flesh of His Flesh, bone of His Bone [cf. John 6:53-57]."⁸

In Holy Relics, therefore, we do not see dead bones — far from it — what we see in Holy Relics is the result of communion with the Lord, the result of sharing the very Life of the Most High God (cf. Rom. 9:5) — communion with Him Who is Self-Life (*autozoen*), Who is Life itself. United with Christ, then, though we pass through "the valley of the shadow of death," we pass from death to Eternal Life. This is the point where the created meets the uncreated, where earth meets heaven face to face, the point at which our life is transformed by Him into divine Life (cf. Ezek. 37:1-14).

"God became human that we might be made gods." The deification of man is thus the express purpose of the first Parousia of Christ. It is for the sake of us human beings, for the purpose of our deification, that the Son and Word of God — He "who is above all being" — was born of the Virgin. There was no need for God to do this: deification is a pure gift freely given by God Himself. For this reason, Salvation bears witness to God's great mercy and ineffable love for mankind.

The question naturally arises: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" (Ps. 116:12). And the Psalmist, inspired by the Holy Spirit, teaches us what the correct response to the divine offering ought to be: "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps. 116:13). What else is there left for us to do, in other words, but to accept what God is offering us in humility, confess the great things which God has done for us in both word and deed, and give glory?

That is what the Church, by every means at Her disposal, teaches us to do. And so we sing: "Today Christ is born of the Virgin in Bethlehem. Today He who knows no beginning now begins to be, and the Word is made flesh. The powers of heaven greatly rejoice, and the earth with mankind makes glad. The Magi offer gifts, the shepherds proclaim the marvel, and we cry aloud without ceasing: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men."⁹

— Dr. Christopher Veniamin

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷We Shall See Him As He Is, pp. 192-193.

⁸Doxastikon by John the Monk, at "Both Now . . ." for the Lauds of the Feast.

⁹Saint Silouan the Athonite, p. 352.

St. Mark's Church, Wrightstown, Celebrates 25th Anniversary



Fr. Theodore greets the diocesan hierarch

This year St. Mark's Orthodox Church in Wrightstown, Pennsylvania joyfully celebrated its silver anniversary. His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN arrived on the evening of October 3, beginning the anniversary festivities. At the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy the next morning His Eminence was assisted by Archpriest Theodore Heckman, Deacon Gregory Moser, and Seminarians Jason Vansuch and Daniel Andrejuk. Reader George Nakonetschny chanted the Hours, and the present parish warden Mr. Peter Bohlender was tonsured Reader.

Father Theodore was presented with the jeweled cross, a very beautiful one having been provided through the gener-

osity of the parishioners. Assisting in the altar were the parish altarboys, Stephen Sedor, Justin Heckman, Nicholas Moser, Gregory Swan, and Andrew Ergemlidze. Awards of recognition were presented by His Eminence to two families for their dedicated service to the parish: James and Monia Pitra, and Peter and Sandy Bohlender.

During the festivities, a magnificent icon of the Pantocrator, painted and installed by Mrs. Katerina Papaioanou, was blessed by the Archbishop. Later at the banquet an oil painting of the church building was presented to the parish by the artist, Mrs. Leila Bakashvili, a parish

Continued on the next page.



St. Mark's Church

Continued from page 23.

member. This was a second rendition; the first had been presented as a gift to His Holiness, Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia, a few months before.

The choir of St. Mark's sang the responses with great reverence and beauty under the capable direction of Mr. Sergei Arhipov, assisted by Mrs. Martha Moser. In recent years St. Mark's Choir has developed admirably, singing responses from a great variety of traditional Orthodox musical heritages. The duties of directing are shared among three fine choir-masters: Mr. Arhipov, Mrs. Moser, and Mr. Tom Scheponik.

After the Liturgy and a brief fellowship gathering, the celebration continued with a banquet at nearby Mill Race Inn, Holland, Pa. Archbishop HERMAN spoke of the good spirit of St. Mark's parish and encouraged the members to continue and to expand their efforts, growing in the knowledge of eternal truths, striving to fulfill the teachings and commands of Jesus Christ, and laboring to build up the Holy Church, Christ's Mystical Body.

St. Mark's Origins

The parish, presently located in a beautiful wooded five-acre setting in picturesque Bucks County, began its life twenty-five years ago. Regular services began in July 1973, in the borrowed historic Trinity Church, Buckingham, Pa. Guided in the early years by Father Vladimir Borichevsky of blessed memory, St. Mark's had as its foundation the ideal of a parish where everyone, of whatever ethnic background or

with no prior Orthodox heritage, would feel equally welcome and at home. Later guided by the capable hands of Fr. John Kowalczyk and then Fr. Stephen Karaffa, the parish continued its mission as a place of worship, prayer, learning, fellowship, and charity in the practice of Orthodox Christian discipleship.

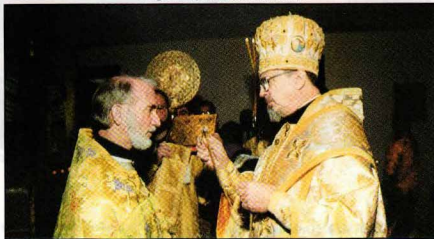
In 1987 the present property was acquired in Wrightstown, and a new church edifice was built. The consecration of the

new building took place in 1989, marking a new phase in St. Mark's development. In September 1992, the present Rector, Father Theodore Heckman, was assigned. Soon after, Deacon Gregory Moser was attached to the parish.

We thank our Savior for the blessings we have received and pray that He will continue to bless us with His divine grace and aid as we prepare to enter the third millennium.



Sergei Arhipov directs the choir



Fr. Theodore is awarded the Jeweled Cross



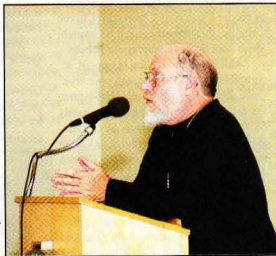
Receiving Holy Communion



Address by Archbishop Herman

Lecture Series 1998:
Keynote Speech
Mission, Evangelism, Growth

*Jesus came to his disciples in Galilee,
And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted . . .
And Jesus . . . spake unto them, saying,
All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
Go ye therefore, and teach 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 whatsoever I have commanded you:
and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
(cf. Mt. 28:16ff)*



Fr. John Reeves

With these words, with this Great Commission, our Lord Jesus Christ sent forth not only his apostles, but his Church, sending them, sending us first to Jerusalem, and then to Judea, to Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Great Commission defines the work of the Church for all ages, that the world may know the only true God, even Jesus Christ whom he has sent. As God did send Christ into the world, even so did Christ send his apostles, his disciples, his Church, that mankind might be sanctified through the truth, that we all may be one; even as the Father is in Christ and Christ in the Father, that the world may know that God has sent his Son and has loved his disciples as he has loved the Only-Begotten.

In order to deal with the issue of Mission, Evangelism and Growth, we have to ask ourselves the basic question, the fundamental, existential question, Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? How are we going to get there?

For the Orthodox Christian, the question of who we are can never be dismissed from, separated out of the Church. Our identity, our very life is grounded in a relationship with the Eternal God, through his Son, by his Spirit and in his

Church. All questions of nationality and ethnicity, of family and personal identity pale in comparison. Our very being, our new being, having been born again, not after the flesh, but by water and the Spirit reconstitutes our very nature, the nature of those who are strangers and pilgrims on earth who seek a better country from whence we have come out, that is, a heavenly country, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called our God. For he has prepared for us a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

This is who we are, a people who are pilgrims and strangers upon earth, seeking a heavenly country, a city not made with hands, a new, a heavenly Jerusalem. Who we are, why we are here, where we are going, how we are going to get there — these fundamental questions are answered in the Church, the Body of Christ itself.

To understand our missionary nature, as human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, is the task of every age. Mission fails because we fail to understand who we are. We fail to go to the uttermost parts of the world. We fail to teach all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us. We fail, we forget, we ignore our very being.

I find it not a little ironic, indeed, sad, that an Office of Church Growth and Evangelism has been reactivated in the life of the Orthodox Church in America. Ironic and sad, because the very nature of the Church is one of mission. To departmentalize, to bureaucratize the essential charter of the Church is an indictment of us all. That we have a reactivated Office of Church Growth and Evangelism is not merely commentary that we do not understand who we are or why we are here as the Church of the Living God. It is a confession, it is an indictment, that we have lost our way.

I will state from the outset that neither this lecture nor this Office's mere existence will result in mission, evangelism or growth. We would be more than foolish to believe that.

Blessed Justin Popovich has stated this so well:

"The mission of the Church, given by Christ and put into practice by the Holy Fathers, is this: that in the soul of our people be planted and cultivated a sense and awareness that every member of the Orthodox Church is a Catholic Person, a person who is for ever and ever, and is God-human; that each person is Christ's,

Continued on the next page.

Mission, Evangelism, Growth

Continued from page 25.

and is therefore a brother to every human being, a ministering servant to all men and all created things. This is the Christ-given objective of the Church. Any other is not an objective of Christ but of the Antichrist. For our local Church to be the Church of Christ, the Church Catholic, this objective must be brought about continuously among our people.

"And yet what are the means of accomplishing this God-human objective? Once again, the means are God-human because a God-human objective can only be brought about exclusively by God-human means, never by human or any other means. It is on this point that the Church differs radically from anything which is human or of this earth.

"These means are none other than the God-human ascetic exertions and virtues. And these can be successfully practiced only by God-human, Christ-bearing ascetics. God-human virtues exist in an organic kinship. Each has its source in the other and they bring one another to completion. [These are] the effort of faith, prayer and fasting, love, meekness and humility, of patience and humility . . .

"This mission of the Church is facilitated by God Himself because among our people there exists an ascetic spirit as created by Orthodoxy through the centuries. The Orthodox soul of our people leans towards the Holy Fathers and the Orthodox ascetics. Ascetic exertion, at the personal, family and parish level, particularly of prayer and fasting, is the characteristic of Orthodoxy, because — as Christ did — it sums up the Gospel in these two virtues: prayer and fasting . . .

"The Ascetics are Orthodox or the only missionaries. Asceticism is her only missionary school. Orthodoxy is ascetic effort and it is life, and it is thus by effort and by life that her mission is broadcast and brought about . . . this ought to be the inward mission of our church amongst our people. The parish must become an ascetic focal point. But this can only be achieved by an ascetic priest. Prayer and fasting, the Church-oriented life of the parish, a life of liturgy: Orthodoxy holds these as the primary ways of effecting rebirth in its people. The parish, the parish community, must be re-

generated and in Christlike and brotherly love must minister humbly to Him and to all people, meek and lowly and in a spirit of sacrifice and self-denial. And such service must be imbued and nourished by prayer and the liturgical life. This much is groundwork and indispensable. But to this end there exists one prerequisite: that our Bishops, priests, and our monks become ascetics themselves."¹

Indeed, as Fr. Justin perhaps not so gently reminds us, it is by ascetical effort that we discover, or rediscover, this Orthodox soul, grounded and nurtured in the Church which by nature, rather than by department, is missionary. The ascetical struggle becomes the defining

out on the journey does not mean that we shall have arrived at our destination.

Evangelism

And [Jesus] came to Nazareth where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read . . . And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the accept-



Archbishop offers concluding remarks

action by which the Church's mission is effected, is realized, soul by soul.

Yet ascetical struggle cannot be limited to the professional ascetics, any more than can mission or evangelism or growth be limited, be restricted to bureaucracies and offices. Asceticism is not the length of hair, the dirtiness of clothing, or the number of knots on a prayer rope. Asceticism is that pilgrimage, that estrangement from this world seeking always a better, and not merely a better world but a new heaven and a new earth. For Bishops and priests and monks, and for layman and laywoman alike as well.

This is where, this is how mission begins. It sets in motion what we are sent forth to do, to preach the Gospel even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Without the ascetical struggle we shall never complete our mission. Yet setting

able year of the Lord" . . . And he began to say unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (cf. Lk 4:16ff).

In this very first sermon of his public ministry, our Lord demonstrates the problem that Israel possessed. She read the Law and the Prophets every week in the synagogues. It was one thing to read them. It was quite another for the Lord to proclaim them fulfilled. Israel read the Law and Prophets, but she did not expect their fulfillment. Israel read the Law and the Prophets but she did not believe what she had read. And Christ reminded them of their age-old problem, the rejection of the Law and the Prophets, that Elijah was sent to none save a woman of Sidon, not to Israel; and Elisha cleansed none but Naaman the Syrian.

Too often we have taught not whatsoever Christ has taught, but we have re-

membered only that which has been convenient. Because of our unbelief, we have failed to preach the gospel to the poor, to the brokenhearted, to captives, to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, preaching the acceptable year of the Lord.

We have parsed at the Scriptures like politicians at the truth. And we are the poor, the broken, the captive, the blind, the bruised. Until we hear good news ourselves, until we are possessed of the truth who is Jesus, then we have nothing to say to the world and souls perish daily for our unbelief.

The Good News, the Gospel, is Jesus himself. The Good News, the Gospel, is the proclamation that the Kingdom of God is here, heaven on earth, that heavenly Jerusalem set down in our midst, or rather our ascent in the liturgical life of the Church to that place at the right of the Father and prepared for us from before the foundations of the earth.

We hear more of evangelization than of evangelism. We falter, we fail because we look for methodology rather than expect power from on high. We look for a program rather than preach Christ. Without evangelism, there can be no evangelization, whatever, but it seems that at times we do not wish to understand, any more than did Jews of old. Uncircumcised in spirit, stiff-necked and proud, we do not bend the knees of our hearts at the Name of Jesus. And by lethargy and indolence, by sloth and indifference, we wait for another deliverer of Israel.

Are we ashamed of the Cross? Of Christ, crucified and risen? Do we hide the Gospel in our own hearts. God preaches the Gospel to Phoenicians and Syrians. He preaches through Phoenicians and Syrians, even when Israel excises Christ from her canon and

her heart.

Let me illustrate. Recently, an article appeared in the press naming the eight most influential people at Penn State University. One of those mentioned is a man known as the "Willard Preacher," because he has preached in the open air for more than sixteen years, five days a week, in front of the Willard Building, enduring the taunts, the insults, and even bodily injury. I will not embarrass you by asking for a show of hands how many of us take our faith that seriously; or, how many of us believe, for that matter, that Christ has truly come in our lives, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand where and how we live.

The "Willard Preacher" preaches Good News and is one of the most influential people at Penn State, because the "Willard Preacher" believes what he preaches. He lives what he preaches. Preaching against homosexuality, for example, he was accused of hatred by the lesbian who slapped him. Spat upon, reviled, derided: this is the price we pay for preaching Good News to the poor, healing the brokenhearted, deliverance to captives, recovering of sight to those who are blind, setting at liberty them that are bruised, preaching the acceptable year of the Lord.

And we might ask, Why aren't we doing something like this, ourselves?

This Pascha that Willard Preacher and his family will be received into Holy Orthodoxy because he had not parsed the text. He had not reduced the Scriptures to the minimum or to the credible. He kept looking for a city with foundations, whose maker and builder was God. And Bright Monday will reveal him back on the front lines of the Gospel, a white monk, an ascetic in the world in front of the Willard Building, preaching the Or-

thodox faith at Penn State.

Now not all of us, even of the clergy, are called to public preaching. But we are all called to the evangelical life, such that we might give evidence to all who would ask of the reason of the hope that lies in us. Once the family and the parish and the diocese and the national Church are transformed by the ascetical life, then evangelical zeal will be the wellspring by which growth of the Church takes place.

Growth

Recently, a brother insisted to me that we should not be speaking of Church growth at all, but of Church health. Indeed, the health of a church locally determines ultimately whether or not its members first of all grow in the Lord and whether the Lord adds to that parish numerical growth.

After Pentecost had come, St. Peter preached unto the men of Judea and to all that dwelt at Jerusalem, saying, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God will call." . . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in

Continued on the next page.



Mission, Evangelism, Growth

Continued from page 27.

the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:38, 2:42-47).

The health of our churches, of our parishes can always be measured by our fidelity to the vision of the Church in Jerusalem following Pentecost. It was a community defined by its adherence to apostolic teaching, a community — a *koinonia* — centered around the Lordship of the Risen Christ, known to them in the *breaking of bread and the prayers* — which is to say, the eucharist and the liturgical life. They were steadfast. Rooted in right belief and right worship, they continued with one accord; all that believed were together. They had all things common. They even sold their possessions and parted them to all men as each had need.

This is the one heart, the one mind we sing about before we say the Creed. The true measure of Church health, and consequently, Church growth is how seriously we live it.

Examples abound of the lack of health in our churches today. The parish of perpetual discord, of rancor, of rebellion against episcopal — that is apostolic — authority, is not one continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine or *koinonia*.

The parish where the Holy Mysteries are mere formalities, the sacramental poll taxes to be paid once a year for all the rights and privileges thereof, is not one where "the breaking of bread" and "the prayers" define the nature of the life of the Body of Christ.

The parish which has lost its first love, like the Church of Ephesus, and now cares more about maintaining its buildings and grounds and cemetery than about Christ himself, stands in danger of having its candlestick removed from before the

throne of God.

The parish which allows false doctrine or sexual immorality to be tolerated, to be winked at, like Pergamos and Thyatira, is first of all called to repentance, to parish health before it can ever hope to grow. At times, sadly, it is that result of sexual immorality, the secondary effect, the toleration of abortion by clergy and parishioners alike, yes, in the Orthodox Church in America.

And it goes without saying, that false doctrine and sexual immorality can be the direct result of Scriptural illiteracy, or of that parsing of the text into obscurity at the behest of the "higher" critics.

The parish which is lukewarm, like Laodicea, like so many of our middle-class churches today, is called to be purged by the Lifegiving Spirit, the Heavenly King, the Comforter, and set ablaze by the grace of God, else it will be vomited out of the mouth of the Lord, being neither hot nor cold.

We must measure our churches by the Church in the Book of the Acts. They must be repentant churches. They must be churches steadfast in the apostles' teaching and *koinonia*, the breaking of bread and the prayers. Their people must be people who are together in heart, and mind, and soul, and body. They must be churches which are willing to grow together, and then to grow up — to mature — in the Lord.

Only then might they grow out, the Lord adding to them such as should be saved. Those would be healthy churches, healed churches, where the Good News had made them whole, and once whole, growing.

Mission, Evangelism, Growth are the evidence that a church's life is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ, and nothing

else: not in church property, not in struggles for power, not in national identities, but in Christ and Christ alone. Mission, evangelism, and growth are the marks of authentic Orthodox Christianity.

They proceed from the person of Christ; they proclaim the Gospel of Christ; they unite the world to Christ. This is his will. This is his commandment, his Great Commission. We have no options, no alternatives. All else is faithlessness and sin.

Jesus says to the churches in Asia Minor, Jesus says to the churches in Pennsylvania, to the churches in the Orthodox Church in America, to the Orthodox Churches around the world:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Apoc. 3:20). Jesus says, I stand at the door and would make Eucharist, be in communion, with you.

But the handle is ours to turn. The icons make that very clear. The absence of mission, the absence of evangelism, the ultimate absence of growth in our churches is indicative of parish life where Jesus Christ stands outside the fast closed doors of hearts, and of homes, and of parish institutions.

Jesus says to my parish and to your parish: Hear my voice. Jesus says to my parish and to your parish: Follow me. Jesus says to my parish and to your parish: Open the door. I will come in. I will sup with you. Jesus says this: That our joy may be full! Jesus says this: That our souls may be saved! Amen.

—Archpriest John M. Reeves

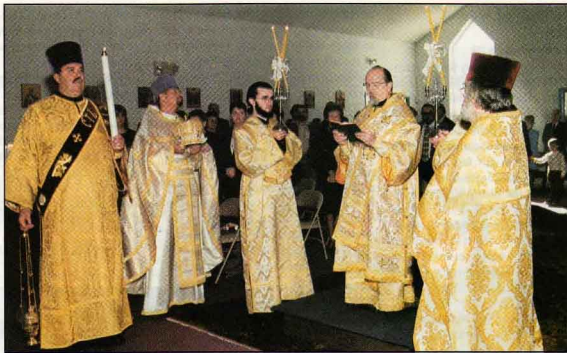
¹ From "The Inward Mission of Our Church," in *Orthodox Faith and Life in Christ* (Belmont, MA, 1994).

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

— Luke 2:10-11





Archbishop Herman offers prayer for the blessing of the new church hall

St. Herman of Alaska Church in Gradyville Celebrates Anniversary

On Sunday November 1, 1998, His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN, along with the clergy and the faithful, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church in Gradyville, Pa. and the solemn dedication of the newly erected Church Memorial Hall adjacent to the Church.

The celebration began on Saturday October 31, 1998 with the arrival of Archbishop Herman and the celebration of the Great Vespers service by our pastor, Archpriest John J. Perich. There were a large number of faithful in attendance and the solemn responses were sung beautifully by the parish choir under the direction of Mr. Gregory Hubiak. Following the Vespers the parish hosted a dinner in the newly constructed Memorial Hall for all in attendance.

On Sunday morning the faithful assembled for the greeting and entrance of our diocesan hierarch. Celebrating the Divine Liturgy along with Archbishop Herman were our own Father John, Father Sergei Glagolev, Director Emeritus of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards,

and Protodeacon Michael Stulpin of the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral in New York City. The responses were sung by the overflow choir under the direction of Mr. Gregory Hubiak. Following the vesting of the Archbishop and the reading of the Hours, His Eminence blessed the newly installed iconostasis which was made by Mr. Yuri Srebreiko and his wife, Yelena and Mr. Sergei Taptykoff over the last several months. During the Divine Liturgy over two hundred people received the sacrament of Holy Communion, including seventy-five children. Truly this a joyful sight — to see so many participating in the spiritual life of our Holy Orthodox Church. After the conclusion of the service His Eminence, accompanied by the clergy and the faithful, held a procession to the new hall, where the Archbishop recited several prayers invoking God's blessings upon the newly erected building and for the protection of those who would desire to study and work therein. It was truly a joy for those in attendance to see their dream of a new hall finally come to fruition.

Only twenty-five short years before, a dedicated group of Orthodox Christians had the vision of starting an Orthodox mission within the western suburbs of Philadelphia, in Delaware County. After years of struggle and sacrifice the parish community was able to procure, not long ago, over four and one half acres of prime property in Gradyville, Edgmont Township, on the border between Delaware and Chester counties, probably the fastest growing area in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Shortly thereafter, the parish erected a magnificent church on the site with a capacity for over two hundred people. Almost immediately, the parishioners, assembling at the annual parish meeting, voted unanimously to undertake yet another project, the erection of the Church Memorial Hall. This was the second phase of the overall project, which was initially approved by the Town Zoning Board upon procurement of the property. The third and final phase, which includes a bell tower and parish offices as well as a choir loft area, is forecast for the near future. All told this has been a

Continued on the next page.

St. Herman of Alaska Church

Continued from page 29.

truly God-inspired journey for the members of this small parish, which numbers only 109 adults and 65 children. Each family has sacrificed and worked diligently to reach this point and to achieve their goal of a truly vibrant Orthodox community within this fast-developing region of our great commonwealth.

Following the blessing of the new Memorial Hall, a grand banquet was held at the Desmond Great Valley Hotel in Malvern, Pennsylvania. It is interesting to note that twenty-seven percent of those in attendance at the grand banquet were youth of our community. The banquet toastmaster was Mr. Don Motel, the present church warden, who in his remarks spoke of the many sacrifices made over the years by the dedicated parishioners of St. Herman's. In his remarks, Father Sergei Glagolev spoke of the great joy and happiness of the magnificent liturgy that we all experienced in the morning and of his remembrance of earlier visits to the parish along with his Matushka Eugenia.

His Eminence, Archbishop Herman spoke eloquently of the work and

progress of the parish over the years and told how pleased he personally was to see so many children actively participating in the life of the Church. His Eminence also spoke of the upcoming diocesan celebration of the millennium of the birth of Christ and especially of the special Great Blessing of Water that will be held in Philadelphia during the month of January. In conjunction with this, Father John presented to Archbishop Herman an exact replica of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, made from actual stone from the town itself, as a reminder of the upcoming Millennium that His Eminence can place on his desk in the diocesan center. The banquet ended with the parish-

ioners presenting to Father John and Matushka Eugenia a vacation gift certificate for all their labors on behalf of the parish over the years.

The following parishioners served on the Anniversary Committee: Don Motel, LuAnn Motel, Anastasia Plisko, Nancy Pcsolyar, Danielle and George Pahomov, Debbie Taylor, Sharon Hubiak, MaryAnn Toroney, Karen and John Wilcox, Daria Tatasciore, Ginny and John Child, and John Lyncb. It was truly a joyous and momentous day in the history of the parish of St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church.

Glory To God For All Things!



Blessing the new church hall



Altar servers



Faithful prepare to commune



Prayer before Communion



Festive banquet for the church anniversary

Lecture Series 1998: Mission — Evangelism — Growth

The Sobering Facts

Christ is in our midst!

Each week here at St. Tikhon's Seminary, I have the privilege of teaching the "Good News," of talking about the great joy that we share as Christians, knowing that Jesus is the Savior, that Christ is risen, and that we are the beneficiaries of His grace, who are being saved. I love teaching that. As I was looking over my notes an hour ago, I began to realize that what I have to say tonight — even though it is about evangelization, and "evangelization" comes from the Greek words for "Good News" — what I have to say is really not good news. It is the "downside" of a most important story.

The sobering facts of our Orthodox evangelistic outreach in America are these: When the Orthodox Church of Russia opened up the Mission to America, she was full of apostolic zeal, and she was full of hopes and dreams. She established parishes all over this country, and she produced great saints among the people of this land. Other ethnic Orthodox groups joined her in that hope, that dream, that work. As that hope and dream and work have continued over two centuries, we have come to be the beneficiaries of that legacy. But the sobering facts of the matter add up to the conclusion that we are really not living up to the lofty mission to America.

Some Statistics

Let me begin by sharing with you some statistics. If you pick up the *World Almanac*, which is a reliable source, you will find that it lists four million Orthodox Christians in America. Truthfully, that figure is exaggerated. Realistically the numbers just are not there. If we have 2,000 parishes in America, that means that the average parish would have 2,000 members. I don't know of one single parish in my diocese that has 2,000 members. Even if we inflate the number of parishes, it is not going to get us where we claim to be. There are not four mil-



Father Michael Dahulich

lion Americans who are Orthodox in this country.

The statistics will further show, and I am sure that His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN and the good priests who are here can verify it, that in most cases, there are fewer people "on the record books" in most of the parishes of most of our dioceses, than there were five years ago, and than there were fifty years ago. I submit to you that these census figures are probably deflated — but nonetheless, these figures are lower than they once were.

The reality is, the scary reality is, that whichever set of figures you use, the average Sunday attendance in our parishes is less than what the censuses say, and less than what it was years ago.

A View of the Present

My grandparents used to tell me how, in their time, churches were filled with worshippers, not just for Divine Liturgy every week, but for Vespers and Matins as well. A realistic question for us might be: aside from Pascha and the Nativity and when the Bishop visits, when are most of our churches today filled with worshippers? You may say that I am

playing some kind of numbers game here; so let me shift gears for a moment. Let me say that not only are the numbers "down," but I think that the level of spirituality, not in certain individual cases, but across the board, is "down" as well. It is not only that attendance is down at Sunday Liturgy, but that attendance is dramatically down for Vespers and Matins, and for feast days and lenten services as well.

Most of our parishes (at least in the greater Philadelphia area) have become "Sunday parishes." You have to schedule all the parish events on Sundays. Years ago in my parish, the children used to come in droves to both the Liturgy and Church School on Saturday mornings and again on Sunday mornings. Today I have trouble getting the parents to bring them just on Sundays. People now have too many things pulling at them, and too many have chosen to let the Church become relegated to a secondary position in their lives. The commitment to Christ, the commitment to His Church, the commitment to the parish, is simply not so strong as it was before. At least it would

Continued on the next page.

The Sobering Facts

Continued from page 31.
seem that way.

Our theology teaches that the Orthodox Church is the True Church of Christ. Indeed, it should make a difference to us that we are Orthodox. For many of our parents and grandparents, Orthodoxy was their identity. But we now live in a country in which the tone of the nation is religious indifference. It doesn't matter to people where they go to Church; after all, there is only one God. And what happens with this view is that it translates to trouble on another level. When the forebears of our families came to this land, each of them was married to someone of the same religious and ethnic background. This is no longer the case. I have been a priest for twenty-five years. I celebrate an average of ten marriages a year. In all of that time, I have only celebrated one single marriage between two people who were "born Orthodox," were never married before, and had no other impediments to that marriage. That may be a low number, compared with other priests' experience, but it does speak to the question. There are many, many mixed marriages, and in many of those cases, the Orthodox Church loses. We lose the Orthodox spouse, and we lose the chance at having the children as our parish members.

This presents us with some other scary facts. Let's consider the number of children in our parishes. Most of our churches are older parishes. Many have fewer children than they had in the past, and some don't even have a religious education program every week. And the children who are in our parishes are also being pulled by this society in all kinds of directions: there is soccer and other sports, clubs and organizations, musical instrument and voice lessons, and a myriad of other things that fill their schedules. Obviously, if we don't have the young people to begin with, we have a less of a pool to draw from for our future priests. The simple reality is that there are not enough priests today, and there will not be enough priests in the future if things continue as they are, to do the work that needs to be done in the Church, in our dioceses, in our parishes. And to complicate the matter, because

of our materialistic society, parents and parishioners are not encouraging men to become priests, because they won't become wealthy; they don't see having a priest for a son as being the great honor that it was fifty years ago.

The Picture in Scripture

Those are sobering facts of our Church in America. This is not the picture that St. Luke paints in his *Acts of the Apostles*. This is not the Church in the midst of a pagan empire that persecuted it, and which, still, from its very first day, grew. St. Luke writes, *And the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved* (Acts 2:47). The picture of the Church that we find in the Gospel is an upbeat one. We hear Jesus, before He leaves this planet, say, *Go therefore and make disciples of all na-*

2:41). A few verses later, in that same Book of Acts, Luke writes about the nature of that young Church: Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:44-47).

The Scripture is not alone in envisioning this picture. Clement of Rome, in his commentary, writes, "And so after having received their instructions and being fully assured through the resurrec-



tions, 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 very end of the world (Matt. 28:19-20).

Saint Luke says that our Lord told the Apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost: *You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes. And you shall be My witnesses, in Jerusalem, and all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the very ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8). That day did come. Do you remember what happened? The Lord's words came true, because Peter testified with many words, and exhorted the people to save themselves from a perverse generation. *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousands souls were added to them* (Acts

of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as confirming the faith by the word of God, they [the Apostles] went forth equipped with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and they preached the Good News that the Kingdom of God is close at hand to all."

Saint John Chrysostom writes, centuries later: "And while the stones of the tomb were fastened upon the vault and its seals yet upon them, the Dead One arose, the Crucified One, the nail-pierced One, and having filled His eleven disciples with mighty power, He sent them to men throughout the world, to be the common healers of their kind, to correct their way of living, to spread throughout all the earth the knowledge of their heavenly doctrines, to bring down the tyranny of devils, to teach those great and unspeakable blessings, and to bring to us the good news of the soul's immor-

tality, and the eternal life of the body, and the rewards which are beyond conception and shall never have an end."

This is the picture of the Church painted by the Apostles. This is the picture presented by the Fathers. This is the picture provided us by St. Herman of Alaska and St. Innocent and Patriarch St. Tikhon, when they were here in America. This is not the picture we see today — except in isolated instances.

The Essence of the Church

Why not? There are a number of reasons. Let's examine some of them. We live in a materialistic society. The measure of a man is his money — not his spirituality. We work on Sunday, we play on Sunday, many of us forget God on Sunday. This is a land of secularism and religious indifferentism. It doesn't mat-

terialism, where the Church is viewed as "our people" — exclusively Greek or Ukrainian or whatever. This is not the mentality of the original mission to America. This is not the identity of the Church in Acts. We don't continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of the Bread and in prayer, with all who believe together having all things in common. Rather, we are Americans, doing things that are only done in America — guarding our property, expressing our own opinions, judging our priests and bishops, criticizing each other. That is the very tenor of some of our parishes.

Many times we forget that the essence of the Church, as is clear from the very meaning of the word "church" in the Greek language, is the *people*. Not the

assessment based on the number of people they claim. So, let's be honest, some parishes "fudge" the figures and we fool ourselves. The number of members we claim for the assessments are deflated, and yet the number of "active" members is really even lower — and too many of us don't even consider, let alone worry about that figure. I need to ask the question, Do all of our parishes really want a Church filled with people? Consider, this will mean new people helping to fill it. This will mean, in our case, people who are not presently Slavic Orthodox . . . people who are not Orthodox by birth, but have chosen to embrace the Faith. Do we truly want this? Or, do some of us want things to be the way they once were? We build beautiful houses of worship, that is for sure. But do we do the work of spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth — where we are right now? Do we do the work of the Church in Acts? Do we visit the sick? Do we feed the hungry and clothe the ill-clad? Do we care for the less fortunate? How much do we care for our own children? In so many of our parishes, the children take a back seat; they don't pay dues, so they aren't really members. And since they don't pay dues, do we budget to pay for their religious education? Do we create the programs that are necessary to keep them safe in the Faith, safe from what is out there in the devil's playground?

Finally, do we pray every day for the Metropolitan and the Archbishop and our pastors? And for the work that they are doing? Or do we grill them at the dinner table on Sundays after Church? If that is happening, it is no wonder that our sons are not becoming priests.

The Bottom Line

I don't want to go back and try to analyze when we went wrong, or how we went wrong, or where we went wrong, beyond what I have said. I keep talking about numbers, so let's talk about the bottom line, today. Picture two columns. In the left column, we have three things: the number of baptisms in your parish this year, the number of chrismations or converts in your parish this year, and the number of Orthodox who have moved into your area and are now attending your church on a regular



ter where we go to Church. It doesn't matter how often we go to Church. If you were present at the Archbishop's celebration, you recall the Auxiliary Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton saying that in Orthodox, God is the center of our worship; in western tradition, man is the center of his worship. And if he doesn't choose to worship on this given day . . . Well, unfortunately, this mentality of the West has permeated the thinking of some of our own people.

I must also say that in a few respects, America is Orthodoxy at its worst. We still remain ethnic ghettos in many cases — especially, the Greek, Carpatho-Russian, and Ukrainian scenarios. There is not *one Church* in America, as there is supposed to be according to canonical order. Rather there are competing jurisdictions. And with that, there is ethnic

building, not the property, not the bank account. The purpose of the Church is to save souls, not money. Too often we reach out, parishes reach out, for the purse string, and not for the soul, not for the heart. If we reach out for the heart, we get the whole person. If you reach for the purse string, you may get nothing.

Let me return to something that I spoke about earlier — about the numbers. Many parishes look at the wrong numbers. At the annual meeting of the congregation, people look at the bottom line of the treasury, yet never look at the number of souls we are winning for Christ and the Kingdom of God. I know what a parish census means — it means that a church is going to get a bill from the diocese, from the national church, and they are going to have to pay an as-

Continued on the next page.

The Sobering Facts

Continued from page 33.

basis. Add those three figures together, and that is the plus sign.

In the right column, add the number of *deaths* (the people who have gone to the Lord), and the *parishioners who have moved away* for whatever reason, and the members who have become *inactive parishioners*, again for whatever reason. Add those three numbers together, and that is the negative side.

Which side is bigger? And by how much? This tells you simply, today, right now, in 1998, if your parish is growing or if your parish is dying. *Baptisms, Converts, and Orthodox who have come to your church* — the plus side. *Deaths, people who moved away, and people who have become inactive and don't come at all* — the negative side.

We Make a Difference

Another way to look at all this is to see how *you* personally affect this. How do you make a difference in that equation? First of all, let me say that in a particular parish, you are one person. Now, unless you leave one person after you, that parish is not breaking even. And unless you leave two persons after you, the parish is not growing. We have many wonderful souls in our parishes who are leaving no one to the Faith after them because (as in my case), they are not married and have no children. Or else their children have married outside of Church, simply no longer come to the parish, or else go nowhere to Church.

You may well say that I have painted a morbid picture. But there is hope. Indeed, with God's help, there is always hope. Consider those sobering statistics. Something can be done; something has to be done. Granted, we can do nothing about the number of baptisms; that depends upon each family. And the numbers in families are smaller today because people cannot afford to send a large number of children to college or give them all the material things the world has to offer. In a sense, we have bought into the materialistic, secular society; so, we have smaller families. And, only in a limited way can we affect the Orthodox who move into the area to join our parish. We can seek them out and encourage them to come and welcome

them to our parish. But if they don't move into our area, there is nothing we can do about that.

But like the Gospel's Great Commission, there is a great deal of work that can be done — regarding converts. I am not going to explain any details, because Fr. Daniel Kovalak will discuss them in his lecture, and he will do a much better job than I ever could. For he has a formula, and it is working. Nonetheless, it is this area — getting new people into our parishes, converting the non-Orthodox to our Faith — that we can affect the positive side of parish growth.

As far as reducing the negative side — there is nothing that we can do when the Lord takes our parish family members. When He calls us to the Kingdom, we cannot say "Sorry, wrong number." When each of us is called, we have to go. Likewise, we cannot do anything about those who have moved away from

all of us can affect and bring about parish growth on both sides of that equation. We can do it, at least theoretically. How? Let's just start! Let's start, beginning with ourselves. The first thing that we need to do is to become convinced of the truth. Perhaps "convinced" is not the word, but rather *re-convinced*. And re-convinced every day . . . convicted . . . of this truth: Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior of each of us and of all of us. And His Holy Orthodox Church is the One and the Only One that He established. She is the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ, she is the Church founded by Christ Himself. She alone has the faith of the Apostles. We need to be able to say that and believe that, and live that and share it with our children. American religious indifferentism is bogus. We are the True Church, we are truly His one Body. He is truly our Head. If we are the not, as I tell my students, we



our parish; because if their job takes them somewhere else, they have to go. What we can do is help them locate into another Orthodox parish. We cannot let them go to the nearest church, whatever denomination it might be — or go nowhere. What we can do on the negative side is to regain for Christ and our parish those people who have become inactive. We must go after those we call the "lost sheep." The Lord Himself said that the Good Shepherd would leave ninety-nine sheep to go in search of the one that is lost. Fr. Daniel Ressetar will speak about this very thing next week.

Re-Convinced, Growing in Truth

Even if I cannot leave a son or a daughter to the Church, I can, you can,

may as well close down this seminary. We may as well close down the Mission to America. We have to believe that we are the True Church. And we have to tell our children that we are the True Church. We have to tell them that we have added nothing at all to the deposit of the Faith, and amputated nothing at all from the life of Christ's Church. You have to have that strong faith! You cannot give it to your children, you cannot give it to your neighbor, you cannot give it to an American who has never been in Church before — unless you have it yourself to give. You can only give to others what you yourself have. We have to recover that sense of the Apostles and the Fathers, and the Christians who have died

for the Faith in the first century, and down to the twentieth century.

Our faith is more than the knowledge of that truth. We have to grow in our knowledge of God. Our faith has to become a way of life, in which we become more and more like God, more and more Christlike. We have to understand that in the early Church, people came to the Lord charismatically. They heard a sermon by St. Peter or St. Paul and they wanted to "sign on the dotted line." They were received into the Church by Baptism and Chrismation, and they understood that they had to continue to grow closer and closer to the Lord until the day that the Lord calls them. We have to have that understanding. We cannot think that somehow "I know it all" . . . "I founded this parish" . . . "I was Orthodox all my life." We need to continue to grow in our knowledge of the Faith. We need to read the Scriptures, to read the

tained in a Christian way; our kitchen, where we fast and feast, as prescribed by the Church; our office, where business is done in an honest, Christian way; the bedrooms, where chastity is maintained in marriage and before it; and the basement and attic, where dark secrets once held sway but where the light of Christ has enabled us to cleanse them away. When we fall short of our Christian duty as servants of the Lord, we need to repent. We need to confess our sins — we need to be forgiven — and we need to forgive others.

We need to heed the words of St. Paul, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God in our life (Rom. 12:2).* Indeed we need to be spiritually renewed. That is why His Eminence has retreats — for men for women, for altar boys and young

most ages and in most countries, people then tend to turn to God, become more spiritual, come closer to the Church. We need to admit the truth and accept the responsibility that Christ gives us: *You are My witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth.* For Peter and Paul, America would surely be the ends of the earth. So, therefore, we must go as Christ says and make disciples of this nation. And while less than 2% of this country is Orthodox — and that is sad — yet we have a great deal of growth potential here, because half of this nation does not attend any church at all. So, even if your town's population is half of what it once was, that still means about 25% of those people do not go to church somewhere. These are still people to whom you can witness for Christ, they can be the source of new membership for your parish.

We all need to become part of the "team," because Church growth is not just the responsibility of His Eminence and the clergy, but rather it belongs to lay people as well. This is the *sobornost* of the Orthodox Church: bishop, priests and people working together. Lay people have a share in the responsibility of spreading the Good News and in the growth of the Church. The role of the faithful is not limited to protecting property and balancing treasury figures. It is the "real stuff" of winning souls for Christ. Statistics show that 86% of the people who are brought to Christ in the Church are brought *not* by bishops and priests, not by advertising, but by friends, relatives, and lay persons. That is a proven, documented fact.

We should not rely on the priest alone to do all the work of parish growth. He must instruct and receive new members into the Church. But the "prep" work, we can do that — all of us! Here is a whole nation, more than 250 million people, half of whom do not have a daily, personal relationship through prayer and communion with Christ. They are waiting for us. But we must change our attitude, we can no longer hang onto the way we were. We must go back, oh yes — but not 50 years ago, but 2,000 years ago. We must go back to the early Church, to the formula of Scripture, to the formula of the Fathers. We must share God's love



Holy Fathers, to read the lives of the saints. We need to go attend the classes that our priest offers, the lectures that His Eminence affords us. We need to do all that. We need to begin with ourselves. Most importantly, we need to be not only intellectually renewed, but spiritually renewed as well, over and over again.

In a lecture I gave a few years ago, I used the analogy of our lives being like our homes — how we need to have every aspect of our lives, every room of our house, dedicated to Christ, and how every once in awhile, we need to clean house. We need to make sure that our house is in order, and that every corner belongs to the Lord: our family room, where we pray and read and are enter-

people, and for parish councils. That is what the Pilgrimages are all about — to renew the faith and regenerate our spiritual lives.

A Change of Attitude

An important aspect of all of this is our need to admit the truth. If our parish happens to be dying at present, we shouldn't try to deny it. We shouldn't try to justify what is happening by saying that we are in an economically depressed area, and there is nothing that we can do about it. That is not true. Albania and Africa are both below poverty level — and there our Orthodox Church is flourishing. Actually, it would seem that when people have problems or when there is an economic recession or depression, in

Continued on the next page.

The Sobering Facts

Continued from page 35.

with others by sharing our Faith with them. We must become, in the words of Jeremiah, "vessels of clay in the potter's hand." Let the Lord work with us to do what needs to be done.

A New Agenda

Not only must we change the attitude of many of our parishes and people towards the question of parish growth, we also need to change the agenda as well. The most important work of a parish council or an annual meeting of the congregation is not the checkbook balance. It must be the gaining of souls for Christ and His Holy Church. This has to happen and it will happen — with prayer and resolution, by our going out and doing it. We do not need to figure out only ways to raise money. If we increase our Church attendance, if we increase our membership, we would have more money. More importantly, we would be doing the work of the Lord. If we focus our attention on that money business, we are going to shrink the base of our parish, because people do not want to hear about money. They don't want to be told how much to give. They need to be inspired, and then they will do the work of the Church.

We have beautiful churches and wonderful choirs. I was in awe of Saturday's Hierarchical Liturgy in Holy Resurrection Cathedral. I had never been there before, never had the privilege of serving there. Fr. Daniel's choir was magnificent as always. The visiting bishops who spoke said the same thing — how magnificent was the worship. Do we value this treasure we have? We take it for granted, I think. Let's say that you have the *Mona Lisa* — it is your possession. Wouldn't it be a travesty to take that masterpiece of artwork and lock it up in a safe for no one to see? Wouldn't that be criminal? This is what we do with our Faith. If we do not invite people to see our magnificent churches, to hear our beautiful choirs, and to behold the wonders of our Faith — we have locked up the treasure that Christ has given us. I submit to you that every one of us knows a family member, a friend, an acquaintance or a neighbor who used to belong to our Church, who has stopped going

to church who now has no church at all. They need Christ, and we need to be the instrument that brings Christ to them personally. We need to be the instrument that brings that person back to the Lord. If each one of us would bring back one person to the Church in the next five years, our parishes would all double in size.

Your Relationship With Christ

There are times in people's lives when they need Christ the most: times of illness, the death of a loved one, the loss of work, marriage trouble. If you know that a person faces such a time of trial and has no church, and you don't know what to say, and you don't know what to do, then get them in contact with your pastor. Let them find that Orthodox Christianity can be a home for them — a bridge over troubled water — a place to find the caring embrace of the loving Lord. There are many, many Orthodox who have become inactive in the Church. They stay at home and have severed their ties with the parish, for whatever reason. Let me say this — and I want you to remember this, and I want you to tell this to other people — I said this at both of my parishes the first Sunday I was there, and I said it the last Sunday before I left my first parish. The Church is *not* your relationship to the priest, or the bishop, to the parish council, or the person in the pew next to you. The Church is your living relationship with the Lord in an Orthodox way.

So no matter how I fall short as a priest, someday the Lord is going to retire me, and bring in another vessel of clay to do His work. Therefore, you still have to be in the Church. You still have to have that loving and living relationship with Christ. That is what Church is. The Church is *never* — well, so-and-so did this to me, and I'm gone from here for good. I tell my students this all the time: I was a kid during the time of Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church. They changed the language of the services, they turned the altar tables around; they tore down the statues, and they allowed the nuns to wear street clothes — all of this happened at one time. And the people cried and moaned and carried on. But hardly anyone left the Roman Church. In my

parish, if I change the *perogi* recipe, you can be sure someone is going to quit — I know it! My friends, something is very wrong with this.

We need to bring people who have left the Church back home, and have them reexamine their faith. They need to realize this and give another chance to, and take another look at, the community that is the Church. We need to help them to find Christ in their worship, in the Mystery of the Eucharist, in the teachings of the Faith and in the truth of the Gospel — in all those things that really make the Church what she is, not the shortcomings or faults or sins of someone like me. We need to help them find what made the martyrs die for the Faith. And that precious Faith needs to be shared with non-Orthodox people as well. There are so many people who don't have a church, who don't go to church, because they are truly looking for the True Faith in all its fullness. They believe in God, and they probably even consider themselves to be religious to some extent. We need to help them find their home in the True Church, in the True Faith.

We cannot forget about the children — if your parish has 82 or just a few. They are the future of our parishes. They have to be our priority — their participation in the services, their religious education, their involvement in parish life — all have to be ensured, literally at all costs. If it means money, it has to happen. You will not make a profit on a kid — but you will invest a whole lifetime in the Church.

We Can't Do It Alone

Every day, you need to pray for the Metropolitan, the Archbishop, your priest — so that they can continue to do, with Christ's help, the good work that needs to be done — to lead the Church, to lead you, to lead all of us to salvation. We need to pray that Christ will send the Church more priests. We need to encourage that little altar boy to someday "be a priest," or that young man who is toying with the idea of leaving his lot in life in order to serve the Church. We need to be the one person who might "tip the scale" and make a difference for them. Nudge them to St. Tikhon's Seminary.

Continued on page 39.

Christ the Saviour Parish Celebrates Thirty-Five Years of Serving Our Lord



Welcoming the hierarchs

By the grace of God, the Christ the Saviour parish in Harrisburg, Pa., celebrated its 35th anniversary since founding. For the occasion, a four-year iconography project reached completion as icon murals were blessed, along with a custom-made golden chandelier, during the services, held on the weekend of October 17 and 18. The main celebrants were the Most Reverend Theodosius, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and the Most Reverend Herman, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania.

The festivities began with Vespers on Saturday evening served by the pastor, Archpriest Daniel D. Ressetar, who was assisted by the associate pastor, Archpriest Michael G. Kovach; Archpriest Mark Kosev, pastor of Holy Annunciation Macedono-Bulgarian

Church in Steelton; Archpriest Srboljub Jockovich, pastor of St. Nicholas Serbian Church in Oberlin; Archpriest George Daskalakis, pastor of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Camp Hill; Archpriest Michael Slovesko of the American Carpatho-Russian Diocese from Harleysville; Priest Peter Pier, pastor of St. John Chrysostom Antiochian Church in York; Priest John Onofrey, pastor of St. Herman of Alaska Church in Shillington; and Protodeacon Basil Hubiak, from Chicago, a former choir director of the parish. The over one hundred in attendance at Vespers sang the responses with the choir from copies of music sheets printed with the verses and hymns. A fellowship for the guest hierarchs was held in the social room.

Sunday was sunny and warm with the temperature rising to 79 degrees. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, and

His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, were escorted from the rectory to the church by singing parish children and banners and cross bearers. They both were greeted at the church by Mr. John J. Dotsey, the president of the parish council, and Father Dan.

After the Hours were read and the vesting took place, the eleven icon murals — most of them depicting scenes from the earthly life of Jesus Christ — were solemnly blessed. These brilliant works of holy art were written by Father Theodore from Erie, who is now considered to be one of the most distinguished master iconographers in North America. Also blessed were two smaller icons of Jesus Christ and the Theotokos on the side analogs, and the newly installed chandelier.

More than 300 worshippers were
Continued on the next page.

Christ the Saviour Parish

Continued from page 37.

present for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. The main celebrants for this holy event were our Metropolitan and our Archbishop. They were assisted by Protodeacon Basil Hubiak; Protodeacon John Hopko, secretary to the Metropolitan; the pastor and associate pastor; Archpriest Michael Hatrak, assistant dean of the Frackville Deanery and pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Church in Minersville; Father Michael Slovesko; Subdeacons Jason Vansuch and Daniel Andrejuk, students from St. Tikhon's Seminary; Subdeacon Richard Hathaway from the local parish, and six altar servers.

The senior and children's *a cappella* choirs were directed by Mrs. Theodora Ressetar. The assembly also was involved by singing from music sheets that were distributed.

After the traditional Many Years and Eternal Memory were intoned, His Beatitude presented to Father Dan and Matushka Theodora Ressetar, and to Father Michael and Matushka Olga Kovach, ecclesiastical awards from the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox

Church in America "for serving the Orthodox Church in America" for a total of 95 combined years. His Eminence presented then a diocesan award to Mrs. June Taleff, the outgoing president of St. Mary's Altar Guild for her many years of parish service. Light refreshments were then served in the parish hall for those in attendance.

A gala dinner was served to 263 in the ballroom of the downtown Harrisburg Hilton and Towers in the early afternoon. During the banquet program after the meal, about 30 children left for an adjoining room where they were entertained and served snacks with grown-up supervision. The main speakers were Metropolitan Theodosius and Archbishop Herman. John Dotsey introduced the living founders of the parish, Paul Pellegrini, Stephen Pawlak and Andrew Fedetz, as well as the wives of those founders who have departed this life: Matushka Helen Oleynik, wife of the late Deacon Vladimir, and Mrs. Mary Dotsey, wife of the late Joseph who was his father.

At the dinner were a number of clergy from the Orthodox Council of Churches

and from the Frackville Deanery. Other guests were Matushka Eva Hubiak, the wife of "Deacon Bill"; Mother Christophora, Abbess of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City, a former parishioner, and with her, Mother Raphaela; the Exec. Dir. of the Penn. Council of Churches, Rev. Dr. Carl Gittings, and his wife; and Father Michael Shear, pastor of St. Ann's Byzantine Catholic Church, Colonial Park.

In addition to the usual souvenir book with greetings, photographs, and ads that was distributed to everyone, an icon booklet with all the church iconography was available. Also, attractive golden ornaments that depict both the church building and the bell tower, donated by the St. Mary's Altar Guild, were given as special gift souvenirs at each place setting.

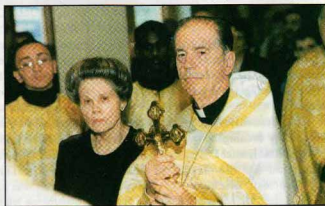
A unique feature at the anniversary dinner was the showing on a large screen of a highly condensed history of the parish taken from old photos, slides, 8mm movies and camcorder shots, professionally produced by Greg Ressetar. This beautiful video montage lasted about thirty minutes.



Children's choir under Matushka Theodora's direction



Carpatho-Russian custom during epistle reading



Fr. Daniel and Matushka Theodora Ressetar

Mr. John Kachur, Esq., a member of the parish council, was the master of ceremonies and chair of the hotel arrangements and the dinner. Amazingly, from the procession and the opening prayer to the closing prayer and the recessional of the dinner, only two hours and twenty minutes elapsed. Before everyone left the ballroom, a disc jockey played ethnic, folk, and modern dance music.

The Orthodox Church is the Church of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and at this celebration the parish firmly reflected the teaching of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (A.D. 787) in particular: that the Incarnation has made representational art possible because God became human, took on flesh, a material body, and deified matter. If flesh has become a vehicle of the Spirit, so then can



Anniversary banquet

wood and paint in a different way. The parish celebrated the belief that all of God's creation, material as well as spiritual, is to be redeemed and glorified.

The 35th anniversary of the parish was a memorable event with so many high-lights and the parish offers thanks to God for its countless blessings.

The Sobering Facts

Continued from page 36.

We need to do those kinds of things. All of this is the work of the Church. All of these things are *your* work — and my work. All this needs to be done in our parishes, week in and week out, until "the Lord comes again." It is constant. It is the work of the Church. It is the work of the Faith. It is the work of the Lord. It is an important work, a holy work, His work.

Like every good Slav, or almost every good Slav, many of you will say, I cannot possibly do all of this. My parish cannot possibly do all of this. And you are right. *We cannot do this work by ourselves.* But if we let the Lord into our lives, He will do the work through us. He will make parish growth happen, and He will do it well — if we just give our lives, and this work and our cooperation with it, to Him. I am certain, my heart tells me that this can assuredly be done. We can recapture the mission to America — we can turn these figures around — that we can win souls for Christ in every parish, whether it is flourishing in the most affluent city, or struggling in the most economically depressed region. We have to be open and let Christ do the work through us.

Twenty-eight years ago, the Lord was truly at work. You may no longer realize it, because you take it for granted. What was once the Russian Orthodox Greek-Catholic Church of America became the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America. It happened, and today every-

one knows that it happened. And the Lord made it happen — through you: bishops, priests, and people. Not without pain, not without struggle, not without adjustments. Now, if you had told that to someone forty years ago, they would have said "Never — that will never happen."

Let me ask you, How many of you were going to Communion every Sunday thirty years ago? Hardly any of you. You probably went only once or twice a year. But today almost every one of you receives the Eucharist almost every weekend. There has been a spiritual revival in the Mysteries of the Faith that did not exist decades ago. Spiritual change in the Church has happened. The whole Church together — bishops, priests, and people made it happen. It can happen, it has happened, it can happen again. Indeed, Church growth can hap-

pen. I believe it will happen; I know it will. Because, through us and with us, the Lord Himself will make it so.

We know this can take place. Twenty centuries ago, at first just twelve men, totally committed to Christ, and later all who were to join them, brought an entire empire to its knees, worshipping the One True God. The power of pagan Rome succumbed to the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us imitate the founders of our Faith and seriously set out to fulfill the Great Commission of our Master here in America, to bring the dream of St. Herman and St. Innocent and Patriarch St. Tikhon to fruition in His Holy Name. Let the Lord do the work in you and through you.

To Him be the glory, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

—Protopresbyter
Michael G. Dahulich

Official

Parish Council Confirmations:

All Saints Church — Olyphant
Christ the Saviour Church — Harrisburg
Holy Annunciation Church — Berwick
St. John the Baptist Church — Edwardsville
St. John the Baptist Church — Nanticoke
St. Mary Church — Coaldale
St. Michael Church — Old Forge
St. Nicholas Church — Bethlehem
St. Stephen Cathedral — Philadelphia

Released:

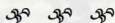
Rev. Alexander Tandilashvili

Assigned:

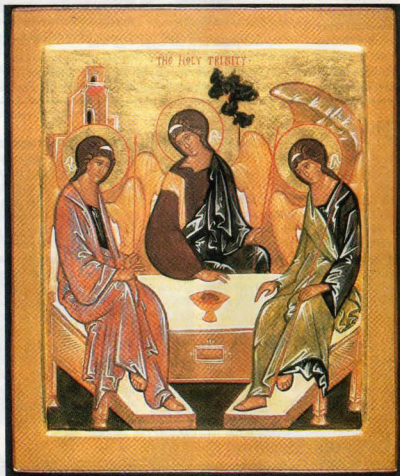
V. Rev. Protopresbyter
Michael Slovesko
Priest-in-Charge
St. John the Baptist Church
— Edwardsville

An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

by St. John of Damascus



Part III



Editor's note: In this section St. John continues and culminates his summary of what we can say and know of God (theology, in the strict sense). In doing so, he follows the earlier Fathers in using two approaches, or methods: the apophatic, or negative, and the cataphatic, or positive. Both are necessary for best expressing what can be expressed of him who is inexpressible, and known of him who is unknowable. As in previous sections of this work,

square brackets indicate alternative translations of words.

1.9 Concerning what is affirmed about God.

The Deity is simple and uncompounded. But that which is composed of many and different elements is compounded. If, then, we should speak of the qualities of being uncreated and without beginning and incorporeal and immortal and everlasting and good and

creative and so forth as essential differences in the case of God, that which is composed of so many qualities will not be simple but must be compound. But this is impious in the extreme. Each of the affirmations about God should then be thought of as signifying not what he is in essence, but either something that it is impossible to make plain, or some relation to some of those things which are contrasts or some of those things that follow the nature, or an energy [opera-

tion, activity].

It appears then that the most proper of all the names given to God is "He who is," as he himself said in answer to Moses on the mountain, "Say to the sons of Israel, 'He Who Is hath sent me.'" For he keeps all being in his own embrace, like a sea of essence infinite and unseen. Or as the holy Dionysius says, "He that is good." For one cannot say of God that he has being in the first place and goodness in the second.

The second name of God is *o theos*, derived from *thein*, to run, because he courses through all things, or from *athein*, to burn: "For God is a fire consuming all evils"; or from *theasthai*, because he is all-seeing; for nothing can escape him, and he keeps watch over all. For he saw all things before they were, holding them timelessly in his thoughts; and each one, in conformance with his voluntary and timeless thought, which constitutes the predetermination and image and pattern, comes into existence at the predetermined time.

The first name then conveys the notion of his existence and of the nature of his existence, while the second contains the idea of energy. Further, the terms "without beginning," "incorruptible," "unbegotten," as also "uncreated," "incorporeal," "unseen," and so forth, explain what he is not. That is to say, they tell us that his being had no beginning, that he is not corruptible, nor created, nor corporeal, nor visible. Again, goodness and justice [righteousness] and piety and similar names belong to his nature, but do not explain his actual essence. Finally, Lord and King and names of that class indicate a relationship with their contrasts; for the name "Lord" has reference to those over whom the lord rules, and the name King to those under kingly authority, and the name Creator to the creatures, and the name Shepherd to the sheep he tends.

1.10 *On divine union and separation.*

Therefore all these names must be understood as common to deity as a whole, and as containing the notions of sameness and simplicity and indivisibility and union, while the names Father, Son and Spirit, and causeless and caused, and unbegotten and begotten, and procession contain the idea of separation, for these terms do not explain his essence, but the mutual relationship

and manner of existence.

Therefore, when we have perceived these things and are conducted from these to the divine essence, we do not apprehend the essence itself but only the attributes of the essence, just as we have not apprehended the essence of the soul even when we have learned that it is incorporeal and without magnitude and form, nor again the essence of the body when we know that it is white or black, but only the attributes of the essence. Further, the true doctrine teaches that the Deity is simple and has one simple energy, good and energizing in all things, just like the sun's ray, which warms all things and acts in each in harmony with its natural aptitude and receptive power, having obtained this form of energy from God, its Maker.

But quite distinct is all that pertains to the divine and human-loving incarnation of the divine Word. For in that neither the Father nor the Spirit have any part at all, except so far as regards approval and the working of inexpressible miracles which the God-Word, having become human like us, worked, as unchangeable God and son of God.

1.11 *On what is affirmed about God as though he had body.*

Since we find in the Scriptures many terms used symbolically concerning God, which are more applicable to that which has body, we should recognize that it is quite impossible for us men clothed about with this dense covering of flesh to understand or speak of the divine and lofty and immaterial energies of the Godhead, except by the use of images and types and symbols derived from our own life. So then, all the statements concerning God that imply body, are symbols, but have a higher meaning; for the Deity is simple and formless. Hence by God's eyes and eyelids and sight we are to understand his power of overseeing all things and his knowledge, that nothing can escape; for in the case of us this sense makes our knowledge more complete and more full of certainty. By God's ears and hearing is meant his readiness to be propitiated and to receive our petitions; for it is this sense that renders us also kind to suppliants, inclining our ear to them more graciously. God's mouth and speech are his means of indicating his will; for it is by the mouth and speech

that we make clear the thoughts that are in the heart; God's food and drink are our concurrence to his will, for we, too, satisfy the necessities of our natural appetite through the sense of taste. And God's sense of smell is his appreciation of our thoughts of and good will towards him, for it is through this sense that we appreciate sweet fragrance. And God's countenance is the demonstration and manifestation of himself through his works, for our manifestation is through the countenance. And God's hands mean the effectual nature of his energy, for it is with our own hands that we accomplish our most useful and valuable work. And his right hand is his aid in prosperity, for it is the right hand that we also use when making anything of beautiful shape or of great value, or where much strength is required. His handling is his power of accurate discrimination and exactness, even in the minutest and most secret details, for those whom we have handled cannot conceal from us anything within themselves. His feet and walk are his coming and presence, either for the purpose of bringing help to the needy, or vengeance against enemies, or to perform any other action; for it is by using our feet that we come to arrive at any place. His oath is the unchangeableness of his counsel, for it is by oath that we confirm our compacts with one another. His anger and fury are his hatred of and aversion to all wickedness, for we, too, hate that which is contrary to our mind and become enraged at it. His forgetfulness and sleep and slumbering are his delay in taking vengeance on his enemies and the postponement of the accustomed help to his own. And to put it shortly, all the statements made about God that imply body have some hidden meaning and teach us what is above us by means of something familiar to ourselves, with the exception of any statement concerning the bodily sojourn of the God-Word. For he for our salvation took upon himself the whole nature of humankind, the thinking spirit, the body, and all the properties of human nature, even the natural and blameless passions.

1.12 *On the same.*

The following, then, are the mysteries which we have learned from the holy
Continued on the next page.

An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith

Continued from page 41.

oracles, as the divine Dionysius the Areopagite said: that God is the cause and beginning of all, the being of all things that have being; the life of the living; the reason of all rational beings; the intellect of all intelligent beings; the recalling and restoring of those who fall away from him; the renovation and transformation of those who spoil what is according to nature; the holy foundation of those who are tossed in unholiness; the steadfastness of those who have stood firm; the way of those whose course is directed to him, and the hand stretched forth to guide them upwards. And I shall add he is also the Father of all his creatures (for God, Who brought us into being out of nothing, is in a stricter sense our Father than are our parents who have derived both being and begetting from him); the shepherd of those who follow and are tended by him; the radiance of those who are enlightened; the initiation of the initiated; the divinity of the deified; the peace of those at discord; the simplicity of those who love simplicity; the unity of those who are united; of all beginning the beginning, super-essential because above all beginnings; and the good revelation of what is hidden, that is, of the knowledge of him so far as that is lawful for and attainable by each.

Further and more accurately concerning divine names

The Deity being incomprehensible is also assuredly nameless. Therefore since we do not know his essence, let us not seek for a name for his essence. For names are explanations of actual things. But God, Who is good and brought us out of nothing into being that we might share in his goodness, and Who gave us the faculty of knowledge, not only did not impart to us his essence, but did not even grant us the knowledge of his essence. For it is impossible for nature to understand fully the supernatural. Moreover, if knowledge is of things that have being, how can there be knowledge of that which is above being? Through his unspeakable goodness, then, it pleased him to be called by names that we could understand, that we might not be altogether cut off from the knowledge of him but should have

some notion of him, however vague. So inasmuch as he is incomprehensible, he is also unnameable. But inasmuch as he is the cause of all and contains in himself the reasons and causes of all that is, he receives names drawn from all that is, even from opposites: for example, he is called light and darkness, water and fire, in order that we may know that these are not of his essence but that he is super-essential [above being] and unnameable: but inasmuch as he is the cause of all, he receives names from all his effects.

Wherefore, of the divine names, some have a negative signification [are said apophatically], and indicate that he is super-essential [beyond being]; such are "non-essential," "timeless," "without beginning," "invisible": not that God is inferior to anything or lacking in anything (for all things are his and have become from him and through him and endure in him), but that he is pre-eminently separated from all that is. For he is not one of the things that are, but over all things.

Some again have an affirmative signification [are said cataphatically], as indicating that he is the cause of all things. For as the cause of all that is and of all essence, he is called both "being" and "existence" [essence]. And as the cause of all reason and wisdom, of the rational and the wise, he is called both reason and rational, and wisdom and wise. Similarly he is spoken of as intellectual [mind, *nous*] and intellectual [notetic], life and living, power and powerful, and so on with all the rest. Or rather those names are most appropriate to him which are derived from what is most precious and most akin to himself. That which is immaterial is more precious and more akin to himself than that which is material, and the pure than the impure, and the holy than the unholy: for they have greater part in him. So then, sun and light will be more apt names for him than darkness, and day than night, and life than death, and fire and spirit and water, as having life, than earth, and above all, goodness than wickedness: which is just to say, being more than not being. For goodness is existence and the cause of existence, but wickedness is the negation of goodness, that is, of existence. These, then, are the affirmations and the negations, but the sweetest names are a combination of

both: for example, the super-essential essence, the Godhead that is more than God, the beginning that is above beginning, and the like. Further, there are some affirmations about God which have in a preeminent degree the force of denial: for example, darkness: for this does not imply that God is darkness but that he is not light, but above light.

God then is called Mind and Reason and Spirit and Wisdom and Power, as the cause of these, and as immaterial, and maker of all, and omnipotent. And these names are common to the whole godhead [divinity, deity], whether spoken apophatically [by negative approach] or cataphatically [by positive approach]. And they are also used of each of the subsistences [hypostases, existences, "persons"] of the Holy Trinity in the very same and identical way and with their full significance. For when I think of one of the subsistences, I recognize it to be perfect God and perfect essence; but when I combine and reckon the three together, I know one perfect God. For the Godhead is not compound but in three perfect subsistences, one perfect indivisible and uncompound God. And when I think of the relation of the three subsistences to each other, I perceive that the Father is super-essential Sun, source [well-spring] of goodness, fathomless sea of essence, reason, wisdom, power, light, divinity; the generating and productive source of the good hidden in itself. He himself, then, is mind, the depth of reason, begetter [parent] of the Word, and through the Word the producer of the revealing Spirit. And to put it shortly, the Father has no reason, wisdom, power, will, save the Son who is the only power of the Father, the immediate cause of the creation of the universe; as perfect subsistence [hypostasis] begetter of perfect subsistence in a manner known to himself, who is and is named the Son. And the Holy Spirit is the power of the Father revealing the hidden mysteries of his divinity, proceeding from the Father through the Son in a manner known to himself but different from that of generation. Therefore the Holy Spirit is the perfecter of the creation of the universe. All the terms, then, that are appropriate to the Father, as cause, source, begetter, are to be ascribed to the Father alone; while those that are appropriate to the caused,

begotten Son, Word, immediate power, will, wisdom, are to be ascribed to the Son; and those that are appropriate to the caused, processional, manifesting, perfecting power, are to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Father is the source and cause of the Son and the Holy Spirit: Father of the Son alone and producer of the Holy Spirit. The Son is Son, Word, Wisdom, Power, Image, Effulgence, Impress of the Father and derived from the Father. But the Holy Spirit is not the Son of the Father but the Spirit of the Father as proceeding from the Father. For there is no impulse without Spirit. And we speak also of the Spirit of the Son, not as through proceeding from him, but as proceeding through him from the Father. For the Father alone is cause.

1.13. *Concerning the place of God, and that the Deity alone is uncircumscribed.*

Bodily place is the limit of that which contains, by which that which is contained is contained; for example, the air contains but the body is contained. But it is not the whole of the containing air which is the place of the contained body, but the limit of the containing air, where it comes into contact with the contained body; and the reason is clearly because that which contains is not within that which it contains.

But there is also mental place where mind is active, and mental and incorporeal nature exists, where mind dwells and energizes [operates, acts] and is contained not in a bodily but in a mental fashion. For it is without form, and so cannot be contained as a body is. God, then, being immaterial and uncircumscribed,¹ has no place. For he is his own place, filling all things and being above all things, and himself maintaining all things. Yet we speak of God having place and the place of God where his energy [activity, operation, working] becomes manifest. For he penetrates everything without mixing with it, and imparts to all his energy in proportion to the fitness and receptive power of each; and by this I mean, a purity both natural and voluntary. For the immaterial is purer than the material, and that which is virtuous than that which is linked with vice. Therefore by

"the place of God" is meant that which has a greater share in his energy and grace. For this reason the heaven is his throne. For in it are the angels who do his will and are always glorifying him. For this is his rest and the earth is his footstool. For in it he dwelled in the flesh among men. And his sacred flesh has been named the foot of God. The Church, too, is spoken of as the place of God: for we have set this apart for the glorifying of God as a sort of consecrated place in which we also hold converse with him. Likewise also the places in which his energy [activity, operation] becomes manifest to us, whether through the flesh or apart from flesh, are spoken of as the places of God.

But it must be understood that the Deity is indivisible, being everywhere wholly in his entirety and not divided up part by part like that which has body, but wholly in everything and wholly above everything.

Marginal ms. On the place of angel and spirit, and concerning the uncircumscribed.

The angel, although not contained in a place bodily as having figure and form, yet is spoken of as being in place because he has a mental presence and energizes [works, is active] in accordance with his nature, and is not elsewhere but has his mental limitations there where he is active. For it is impossible to be active at the same time in different places. For to God alone belongs the power of being active everywhere at the same time. The angel operates in different places by the quickness of his nature and the promptness and speed by which he can change his place; but the Deity, Who is everywhere and above all, energizes at the same time in diverse ways with one simple energy.

Further, the soul is bound up with the body, whole with whole and not part with part: and it is not contained by the body but contains it as fire does iron, and being in it energizes with its own proper energies.

That which is comprehended in place or time or apprehension is circumscribed, while that which is contained by none of these is uncircumscribed. So the Deity alone is uncircumscribed, be-

ing without beginning and without end, and containing all things, and not apprehended in any way. For he alone is incomprehensible and unbounded, within no one's knowledge and contemplated by himself alone. But the angel is circumscribed alike in time (for his being had commencement) and in place (but mental space, as we said above) and in apprehension. For they know somehow the nature of each other and have their bounds perfectly defined by the Creator. Bodies in short are circumscribed both in beginning and end, and bodily place and apprehension.

Marg. ms. From various sources concerning God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And concerning the Word and the Spirit.

The Deity, then, is quite unchangeable and invariable. For all things which are not in our hands he has predetermined by his foreknowledge, each in its own proper and peculiar time and place. And accordingly the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son. For clearly the Father and the Son and also the Holy Spirit judged as God. But the Son himself will descend in the body as man, and will sit on the throne of glory (for descending and sitting require circumscribed body), and will judge all the world in justice.

All things are far apart from God, not in place but in nature. In our case, thoughtfulness, and wisdom, and counsel come to pass and go away as states of being. Not so in the case of God, for with him there is no happening or ceasing to be, for he is invariable and unchangeable; and it would not be right to speak of contingency in connection with him. For goodness goes together with essence. He who always yearns for God, he sees him; for God is in all things. Existing things are dependent on that which is, and nothing can be unless it is in that which is. God then is mingled with all things, maintaining their nature; and in his holy flesh the God-Word is made one in [hypostasis, "person"] with, and is mixed with our nature, yet without confusion.

No one sees the Father, save the Son and the Spirit.

The Son is the counsel and wisdom and power of the Father.

To be continued.

¹Uncircumscribed: literally, "cannot be written around," that is, cannot be contained or enclosed.

What Made Me Become a Christian

My dad was allergic to fairy tales. He would not have them in the house. He said that because children have to take on board so much information to be educated, it was a mistake to fuddle their brains with fantasy. Truth was all-important and its tireless pursuit, up the ladder of the educational system, was the only way to social and economic security. Having left school himself at the age of 14 to work in the local pit, he was keen on education.

He sent all five of us to the Methodist Sunday School, the seedbed of the Labour Party. There I learned the religion of the losers: "Blessed are the meek," was painted on the wall, "for they shall inherit the earth." We were taught the importance of being good and I could see from the pale, pinched, grey faces of the grown-ups in chapel that being good knocked the stuffing out of you. Christianity, as I saw it, was a contract with God: be meek, miserable and deprived in this life and you will win a comfortable berth in the next.

I turned down the offer. Life was too long and exciting to be dampened down in the vague hope of winning the approval of a being who showed so little evidence of being interested — or even around. I did not believe in the existence of God because I had no evidence on which to base such a belief. I was forced to think about the matter every Sunday when, lured by the promise of sixpence a week, I joined the choir at the Church of England and had to stand up and recite the creed.

This gave me a problem: I did not believe in God but had to stand up and say in public that I did. I worked it out that, if God did not exist, then there was no harm in my getting up and saying I believed in Him. But, if there was a possibility He was somewhere around, He would know I was lying. I sidestepped

the problem by getting up and mouthing the words with my fingers crossed behind my back.

When I passed for the grammar school I decided that I must be quite clever and discovered that clever people took the view that religion was rather like mumps: a common childhood ailment with few aftereffects for intelligent adults. My heroes were Bertrand Russell, Voltaire and Gibbon, who treated the Church and its officials as always good for a laugh. I discovered a talent for passing examinations and even managed to get to Oxford, where Christianity was commemorated in noble and empty buildings or studied as one of the formative influences in European History. I was still pursuing the truth and was happy to accept psychoanalytical explanations of religious faith as an illusion which comforted the inadequate by falling in with their instinctual desires.

After Oxford, I joined the Colonial Administrative Service and went to the Fiji Islands, drawn by the promise of sun-soaked beaches and coral seas. As a district officer, I had the best job in the history of employment. The role of benevolent despot is deeply rewarding for a lad in his early twenties.

But I came across, in Fiji, and for the first time, men who were intelligent, highly educated, in most respects perfectly normal rational human beings — and yet believed in God. These were the Catholic priests. They introduced me to the scholastics, who taught that the existence of God can be known by the unaided human reason. The question seemed to be an important one and I plunged into a heavy programme of reading. If intelligence and application were the only requirements, I felt I should be able to get there.

My flirtation with Roman Catholicism lasted thirty years and I grew to

admire the massive foundation of scholarship that underpins its teachings. But I could not accept its claims to exclusive infallibility and was still a rational humanist when I left Fiji and began to work in religious television.

Religion on television in the early Seventies was going through an exciting time of change. Both the BBC and ITV were still hoping to be taken seriously and this prompted them to put out religious programmes. Neither wanted to make these programmes which scored low in the ratings, so they had made a "gentleman's agreement" that they would put out their religion at the same time. This time was known in the trade as the "God slot." It ensured an audience for religious programs by depriving the viewer of any alternative.

But, in 1974, the BBC boldly went with a new religious series, into the bracing winds of competition on the open channels. It had the confidence to do so because it employed, as programme makers, not the professionally religious who may not have talent in television, but the professional television programme makers who may not be religious. We launched *Everyman* on BBC 1 and were soon picking up respectable viewing figures.

As reporter on the series, part of my job was to be exposed to situations which could trigger religious experience. I climbed a vision-quest mountain with a Sioux Indian chief, donned a nightshirt and rolled around on a carpet for Baghwan Shree Rajneesh, fasted for a week, was beaten over the head with a peacock feather by a guru who promised *shaktipat*, or instant enlightenment, interviewed religious leaders across the spectrum from Catherine Bramwell-Booth to the Pope and tussled with continental theologians. My scepticism remained intact. I was looking for a truth

which my reason could accept and nobody seemed to have it on offer.

Although I use the words "looking for," it was important to me that I was exploring and not searching. To explore is to look for whatever is there; to search is to look for something that is missing. And I knew enough about materialist psychological explanations of religious belief to be wary of filling a need by self-deception.

I made a film about Russian Orthodoxy in 1975 and was impressed by its effects on the people I met. They didn't recognize the Pale Galilean with whom I'd been taught at Sunday School to strike that grey and life-denying bargain. They ate and drank hugely, would burst into song and roar all night given half a chance. They were excessive in everything and passionate about music and poetry and food and conversation. I suggested that their Russianness was getting the better of their Christianity, but they protested that a zest for living was the essential mark of an incarnational faith. Since God had taken on flesh, matter could be spirit-bearing and Christians worship God by their enthusiasm for the things of this world. I was not convinced of the theology behind it all but certainly approved of its effects.

So when my wife was baptized into the Orthodox Church in 1983, I welcomed the regular contact with an organization that I knew would make no unpalatable demands for moderation and seemly behavior. They let me, an unbeliever, sing in the choir and I enjoyed the theatrical experience of the liturgy: the music, the icons, the incense and the costumes.

We first went to Patmos in 1987 and I was struck immediately by the appetite for life among the islanders. This was a holy island officially labeled as such by decree of the Greek government — dominated by a lowering monastery and overrun by winding crocodiles of somber-suited pilgrims. But the islanders, the Patmians, have the same zest for living as the Russians and are united in the same Orthodox faith. As a belief system, it seemed to produce excellent results. I needed to find out if there was truth in it.

The Russian theologians were im-

pressive, especially those who had gone through a period of Marxism and come out the other side. Their critique of Western culture and of the enlightenment ideals which confined our cognitive powers to the human reason was masterly. And their historical analysis, which demonstrated that the original deposit of faith was contained in the Orthodox Church before Rome broke away was highly persuasive. I was delighted to discover that they saw the Pope as the leader of the Protestant world.

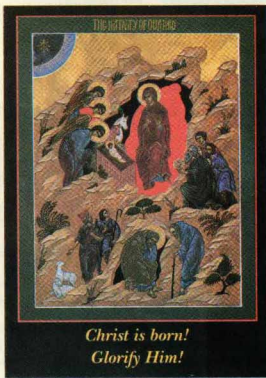
It soon became clear to me that the Orthodox Church was the closest to the original; that the aesthetic and sensual appeal of the Orthodox liturgy was strong; and that the effect of the Orthodox faith was life-enhancing. But none of this made its teachings true. And I was

still hoping to discover a verifiable truth in religion.

Then it occurred to me that perhaps the truths of Christianity were not philosophical propositions to be tested by logical reasoning but experiences which were self-authenticating. I knew that the power of great music and of love was this kind of experiential reality. The first words of Jesus Christ to the disciples of John were "Come and see." I had to stop reading about religion and put myself in the way of experiencing it, to stop looking in through the church windows and step inside. So I did.

—Peter France

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Daily Devotions

JANUARY

- Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision)
- 1 Tim. 3:14-4:5 (Sat. Before)
- 2 Tim. 4:5-8 (Sun. Before)
- Heb. 11:17-23,27-31
- 1 Cor. 9:19-27
- Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 (Theophany)
- Acts 19:1-8 (Forerunner)
- James 2:1-13
- Eph. 6:10-17 (Sat. After)
- Eph. 4:7-18 (Sun. After)
- James 2:14-16
- James 3:1-10
- James 3:11-4:6
- James 4:7-5:9
- 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12; 3:6-10
- 1 Thess. 5:14-23
- 1 Tim. 4:9-15
- 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
- 1 Pet. 3:10-22
- 1 Pet. 4:1-11
- 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
- 2 Pet. 1:1-10
- 2 Tim. 2:11-19
- 1 Tim. 4:9-15
- 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
- 1 Pet. 3:10-22
- 1 Pet. 4:1-11
- 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
- 2 Pet. 1:1-10
- 2 Tim. 2:11-19
- 2 Tim. 3:10-15
- Luke 2:20,31,40-52 (Circumcision)
- Matt. 3:1-11 (Saturday Before Theophany)
- Mark 1:1-8 (Sunday Before Theophany)
- Mark 12:13-17
- Luke 3:1-18
- Matt. 3:13-17 (Theophany)
- John 1:29-34 (Forerunner)
- Mark 13:1-8
- Matt. 4:1-11 (Saturday After Theophany)
- Matt. 4:12-17 (Sunday After Theophany)
- Mark 9:42-10:1
- Mark 10:2-12
- Mark 10:11-16
- Mark 10:17-27
- Mark 10:23-32
- Luke 16:10-15
- Luke 18:18-27
- Mark 10:46-52
- Mark 11:11-23
- Mark 11:23-27
- Mark 11:27-33
- Mark 12:1-12
- Luke 17:3-10
- Luke 19:1-10
- Mark 12:13-17
- Mark 12:18-27
- Mark 12:28-37
- Mark 12:38-44
- Mark 13:1-8
- Luke 18:2-8
- Luke 18:10-14

FEBRUARY

- 2 Pet. 1:20-2:9
- Heb. 7:7-17 (Meeting)
- 2 Pet. 3:1-18
- 1 John 1:8-2:6
- 1 John 2:7-17
- 2 Tim. 3:1-9
- 1 Cor. 6:12-20
- 1 John 2:18-3:10
- 1 John 3:11-20
- 1 John 3:21-4:6
- 1 John 4:20-5:21
- 2 John 1:1-13
- 1 Cor. 10:23-28
- 1 Cor. 8:8-9:2
- 3 John 1:1-15
- Jude 1:1-10
- Joel 2:12-16
- Jude 1:11-25
- Zechariah 8:7-17
- Rom. 14:19-26
- Rom. 13:11-14:4
- Genesis 1:1-13
- Genesis 1:14-23
- Genesis 1:24-2:3
- Genesis 2:4-19
- Genesis 2:20-3:20
- Heb. 1:1-12
- Heb. 11:24-6:32-12:2
- Mark 13:9-13
- Luke 2:22-40 (Meeting)
- Mark 13:24-31
- Mark 13:31-42
- Mark 14:3-9
- Luke 20:46-21:4
- Luke 15:11-32
- Mark 11:1-11
- Mark 14:10-42
- Mark 14:43-15:1
- Mark 15:1-15
- Mark 15:22-25,33-41
- Luke 21:9,25-27,33-36
- Matt. 25:31-36
- Luke 19:29-40; 22:7-39
- Luke 22:39-42,45-23:1
- Joel 3:12-21
- Luke 23:2-34,44-56
- Zechariah 8:19-23
- Matt. 6:1-13
- Matt. 6:14-21
- Proverbs 1:1-20
- Proverbs 1:20-33
- Proverbs 2:1-22
- Proverbs 3:1-18
- Proverbs 3:19-34
- Mark 2:23-3:5
- John 1:43-51

MARCH

- Genesis 3:21-4:7
- Genesis 4:8-15
- Genesis 4:16-26
- Genesis 5:1-24
- Genesis 5:32-6:8
- Heb. 3:12-16
- Heb. 1:10-2:3
- Genesis 6:9-22
- Genesis 7:1-5
- Genesis 7:6-9
- Genesis 7:11-8:3
- Genesis 8:4-22
- Heb. 10:32-38
- Heb. 4:14-5:6
- Genesis 8:21-9:7
- Genesis 9:8-17
- Genesis 9:18-10:1
- Genesis 10:32-11:9
- Genesis 12:1-7
- Heb. 6:9-12
- Heb. 6:13-20
- Genesis 13:12-18
- Genesis 15:1-15
- Genesis 17:1-9
- Heb. 2:11-18 (Annunciation)
- Genesis 22:1-18
- Heb. 9:24-28
- Heb. 9:11-14
- Genesis 27:1-42
- Genesis 31:3-16
- Genesis 43:26-32; 45:1-16
- Proverbs 3:34-4:22
- Proverbs 5:1-15
- Proverbs 5:15-6:4
- Proverbs 6:3-20
- Proverbs 6:20-7:1
- Mark 1:35-44
- Mark 2:1-12
- Proverbs 8:1-21
- Proverbs 8:32-9:11
- Proverbs 9:12-18
- Proverbs 10:2-12
- Proverbs 10:31-11:2
- Mark 2:14-17
- Mark 8:34-9:1
- Proverbs 11:19-12:6
- Proverbs 12:8-22
- Proverbs 12:23-13:9
- Proverbs 13:19-14:6
- Proverbs 14:15-26
- Mark 7:31-37
- Mark 9:17-31
- Proverbs 14:27-15:4
- Proverbs 15:7-19
- Proverbs 15:20-16:9
- Luke 12:4-36 (Annunciation)
- Proverbs 17:17-18:5
- Mark 8:27-31
- Mark 10:32-45
- Proverbs 19:16-25
- Proverbs 21:3-21
- Proverbs 21:23-22:4

APRIL

- Genesis 46:1-7
- Genesis 49:33-50:26
- Heb. 12:28-13:8
- Phil. 4:4-9 (Palm Sunday)
- Exodus 1:1-20
- Exodus 2:5-10
- Exodus 2:11-22
- Exodus 19:10-19
- Exodus 33:11-23
- Rom. 6:3-11
- Acts 1:1-8 (Pascha)
- Acts 1:12-17,21-26
- Acts 2:14-21
- Acts 2:22-36
- Acts 2:38-43
- Acts 3:1-8
- Acts 3:11-16
- Acts 5:12-20
- Acts 3:19-26
- Acts 4:1-10
- Acts 4:13-22
- Acts 4:23-31
- Acts 5:1-11
- Acts 5:21-33
- Acts 6:1-7
- Acts 6:8-7:5,47-60
- Acts 8:5-17
- Acts 8:18-25
- Acts 8:26-39
- Acts 8:40-9:19
- Proverbs 23:15-24:4
- Proverbs 31:8-31
- John 11:1-45
- John 12:1-18 (Palm Sun.)
- Job 1:1-12
- Job 1:13-22
- Job 2:1-10
- Job 38:1-23; 2:1-5
- Job 42:12-16
- Matt. 28:1-20
- John 1:1-17 (Pascha)
- John 1:18-28
- Luke 24:12-35
- John 1:35-51
- John 3:1-15
- John 2:12-22
- John 3:22-33
- John 20:19-31
- John 2:1-11
- John 3:16-21
- John 5:17-24
- John 5:24-30
- John 5:30-6:2
- John 6:14-27
- Mark 15:43-16:8
- John 4:46-54
- John 6:7-33
- John 6:35-39
- John 6:40-44
- John 6:48-54



St. Tikhon's Seminary Joyfully Celebrates 60th Anniversary

In 1998, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary joyfully celebrated a triple jubilee: the centennial of the arrival in North America of Patriarch St. Tikhon (1898), perhaps the one person most responsible for the founding of St. Tikhon's Monastery; the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the Seminary (1938); and the 25th anniversary of consecration to the Episcopacy of the Seminary's Rector, Archbishop HERMAN.

St. Tikhon's Seminary was founded in 1938 in accordance with a resolution of the 6th (1937) All-American Church Council (Sobor). From humble beginnings as a Pastoral School, the Seminary has, in the past six decades, grown in both academic and institutional stature. On June 12, 1994, it was officially endorsed by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), as an Associate Member, on par with some 250 institutions of professional theological education in the United States and Canada. This endorsement was the latest step in the ongoing process of growth and movement towards full accreditation of the seminary's theo-

logical education programs by ATS, which is the professional "gatekeeper" accrediting agency responsible for accrediting all North American theological schools on behalf of the Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Dept. of Education.

The larger community of St. Tikhon's Seminary — the trustees, students, alumni, and faculty, staff and administration — gathered on November 10-11, 1998, for a joyful celebration of the school's sixtieth anniversary, a review of accomplishments and challenges facing us, and a round of meetings, consultations, and personal encounters. The two-day celebration was formally opened in the Monastery Church of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk at noon on November 11, 1998, with a service of thanksgiving, celebrated by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, Primate of the Orthodox Church of America and President of the seminary's Board of Trustees, in concertation with eight of the trustees, alumni, faculty and administration in sacred orders. As the gathered community

offered its prayerful gratitude to the Lord for the many mercies bestowed on us over the years, the solemn and forceful singing, conducted by Archbishop Daniel Kovalak, filled the Monastery Church, bearing vivid testimony to the very real spiritual accomplishments of the decades past. After a festive lunch served in the Monastery trapeza, the Seminary family gathered in the auditorium for a Solemn Convocation.

Following the customary prayer to the Holy Spirit, the Most Reverend Rector of St. Tikhon's Seminary, Archbishop Herman, formally welcomed all to the Seminary, noting that the Lord had endowed the seminary with many gifts, and among these, a distinguished and dedicated faculty and equally dedicated students. During the convocation, the various constituents of the seminary — trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and seminarians — were recognized.

At the present time, the faculty is comprised of 19 individuals. Ranked faculty include 2 professors, 4 associate profes-

Continued on the next page.

St. Tikhon's Seminary Marks Sixtieth Year

Continued from page 47.

Continued from page 47. 5 assistant professors, and 1 instructor. Unranked faculty include 2 senior lecturers and 5 lecturers. Of the 19 members of the faculty currently entered on the roster, 10 hold doctorates and other terminal professional degrees, 2 have attained the level of candidacy for the doctorate (minus dissertation). Among the faculty engaged primarily in practical pastoral education and training, 5 hold earned master's degrees (or equivalency) in arts, science, and divinity. Current enrollment figures show 56 students matriculated in three courses of study, the majority of whom are communicants of the Orthodox Church of America. Other Orthodox Churches are also represented, with students from the Orthodox patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Moscow, Georgia, and Serbia.

The Convocation was followed by a brief refreshment break and by meetings of the Alumni Association and of the seminary's Board committees. The Seminary community then gathered in the Monastery Church for Vespers.

Later in the evening, several hundred guests gathered at Genetti's in Dickson City for a festive anniversary banquet, at which Archpriest Yaroslav Sudick, a member of the Seminary's Board of Trustees, ably performed as Master of Ceremonies. Distinguished Service Awards were presented on behalf of the trustees by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, to three faculty members who had faithfully and with distinction had served the Seminary for twenty years or more. The recipients were His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, who first came to the Seminary in 1959 as a student, and has served the school as registrar, vice-rector, professor of homiletics, and rector; Archpriest Daniel Donlick, who came as a student in 1961, and has served as registrar, professor of church history, and the first academic dean; and Archpriest George N. Dimopoulos, who began teaching Greek and New Testament at the seminary in 1965.

On behalf of the faculty, a formal resolution of the faculty council was presented to the seminary rector, Archbishop Herman, by the Academic Dean: "With

Thanksgiving to the Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, glorified in the Holy Trinity, and in grateful recognition of the distinguished labors and devotion of the Most Reverend Rector to the cause of Orthodox Pastoral and Theological Education and the noble vocation of a Theological Faculty, the Faculty of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary formally express its appreciation to and fittingly honor their Archpastor and Rector on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of his episcopal consecration and the 60th Anniversary of the Seminary."

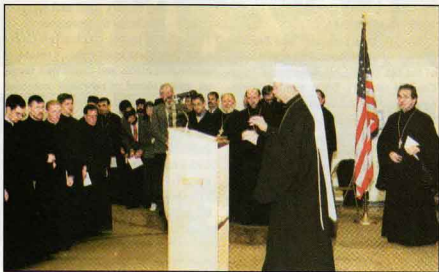
Greetings were offered by Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, Dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York, who noted that the

relationship between the two sister schools has undergone various transformations in time. He noted that he himself had taught at St. Tikhon's Seminary early in his academic and ecclesiastical career, while the late Fr. Alexander Schmemmann not only taught at St. Tikhon's, but also served on the Board of Trustees. The time has arrived, Fr. Thomas observed, for a closer cooperation between the two schools for the benefit of the Church and the Orthodox flock.

In his address to those gathered for the banquet, His Beatitude underscored the Seminary's commitment to Orthodox theological education as well as her faithfulness to the missionary legacy of the larger Church. "That Saint Tikhon's



Service of thanksgiving



Opening the convocation

Seminary has existed for sixty years witnesses to its commitment to providing the Church in America with clergy and lay workers who have received the priceless gift of an Orthodox theological education," His Beatitude remarked. "Sixty years of service to the Church — sixty years of sowing the seeds of theology in the minds and hearts of those dedicated to building up the Body of Christ — is a testament to the necessity of theological training. It is also a testament to the school's vision of continuing the missionary legacy of our saints in America." The achievements of the Seminary, however, have not been without a struggle, His Beatitude observed, for not everyone shared the understanding of a need for

theological education, or a need to overcome ethnic barriers. "Over the course of sixty years, Saint Tikhon's Seminary has had to confront the many voices which considered theological education an unnecessary burden for the Church in America. Because of its dedicated faculty, courageous students, and a spiritually nurturing monastic brotherhood, the school persevered. It stayed the course and instilled in the minds and hearts of the faithful a vision of a Church that extended itself beyond the ethnic boundaries which hindered its missionary and evangelical work." In its particular commitment to traditional Orthodox teachings, Metropolitan Theodosius noted, St. Tikhon's has always sought to balance

the academic with the spiritual, and has directed primary attention to Christ and His Gospel as the main source of theology in the Church: "Through its faculty and graduates — particularly those graduates who are now priests — our Seminary reminds those in the Church that Orthodox theology is not primarily an academic discipline but a way of life. So many pastors — priests and bishops — who received their formation at Saint Tikhon's have witnessed by their own lives that theology draws us into Christ and therefore into the kingdom of new and eternal life. By giving the Church pastors who are exposed to this reality and who can articulate this reality, Saint Tikhon's Seminary has helped to ensure that the Gospel remains uncompromised. Consequently, to those outside the Orthodox Church the seminary is a voice that directs all to the source and fulfillment of everything which is good, true, and beautiful."

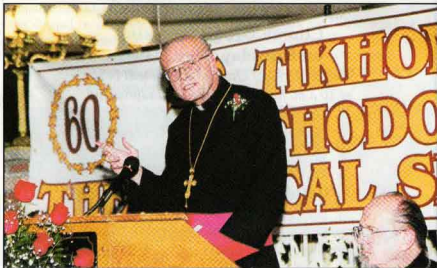
The culmination of the evening's celebration was the formal academic address presented by the invited guest speaker from the larger academic community, the Reverend Canon J. Robert Wright, D. Phil. (Oxon.), St. Mark's Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the General Theological Seminary in New York City, and life fellow of the Royal Historical Society in London. Canon Wright chose for his topic Episcopal Bishop Charles Reuben Hale, of Cairo, Ill., and Hale's biography of St. Innocent of Alaska, which was the first one written about the saint, and was published in 1877, entitled *Innocent of Moscow, the Apostle of Kamchatka and Alaska*. Canon Wright noted that St. Innocent's *Indication of the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven*, first written in Aleut dialect in 1833, is said to be the first piece of literature written in any native language of North America.

Dr. Wright observed that Hale's earlier writings on the Eastern Churches, as well as his travels to the East, "coincided with a heightened interest of Americans, and especially of Episcopalians, in Russia and in the fate of the vast Russian American territories sold by the Empire to the United States in 1867." It was in this context that Hale developed an interest in St. Innocent, which had led him

Continued on the next page.



Luncheon precedes the convocation



Rev. J. Robert Wright gives keynote address

St. Tikhon's Seminary Marks Sixtieth Year

Continued from page 49.

to write his biography. "Hale's biography . . . excerpts and translates many individual documents dealing with Innocent's early missionary activities . . ." and these in turn illustrate his thesis about the heroism and the missionary vigor of Orthodoxy.

"His biography of Innokentii, which demonstrates his first-hand knowledge of both Russian Orthodox and vernacular

sources, came at a highpoint in Episcopalian relations with the Russian Orthodox church. It was an interest that resurfaced in the relations of the Russian missionary Bishop Tikhon of North America . . . with Episcopal Bishop Charles Grafton of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and [of] Tikhon with the New York Episcopal diocese at the end of the nineteenth century."

Archbishop Herman thanked the guest speaker and, in closing remarks, noted that the Seminary, though a humble school, has become a significant center

of theological learning and Orthodox spirituality on this continent. Thanking His Beatitude and all who had come together for the occasion. His Eminence proclaimed Eternal Memory to the departed workers in this academic vineyard of Christ, and Many Years to all who through their prayers and faithful support enable the Seminary's work to continue. After the final prayer and benediction, the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of St. Tikhons Seminary drew to a close.

—Archpriest Alexander Golubov,
Academic Dean



Seminary faculty and trustees

*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*

St. Basil's Church—Simpson

invites all of the Diocesan Family to its

Church Groundbreaking on Saturday, May 1, 1999

The hierarchical Divine Liturgy will begin

at 10 a.m. followed by the groundbreaking

A dinner will be held at

Taverne a la Greene, Carbondale

Tickets are \$20 per adult

For Reservations call

Marie Proch - (570) 587-3097

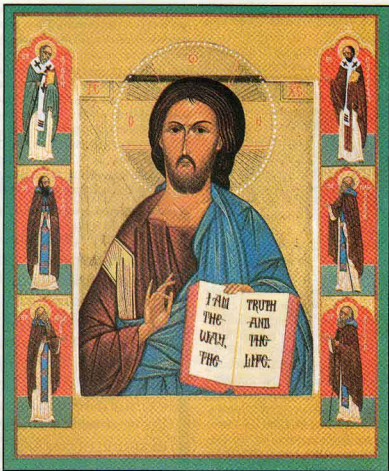
*We hope you can join us for this celebration, as we work
toward the building up of the Orthodox Church.*

The Pastor: Call and Response

On Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, our Lord commissioned His Apostles to carry on His message. The charge Christ gave to man was to *go therefore and make disciples of all nations* (Matt. 28:19) to proclaim the Truths of His Gospel and extend the Church He founded. The goal of the Church is to transmit its Truths and in order to attain its aim, Jesus Christ selected dedicated persons to carry on this ministry. Our Lord Himself selected Twelve Apostles to carry on with authority His Gospel when Christ *all night continued in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples and chose from them twelve, whom He named apostles* (Luke 6:12,13).

Jesus Christ selected this special group of men to carry this ministry and in time, He sent them to preach His Gospel and to baptize all over the world. These men were chosen to establish His Kingdom with living people; they were trained as they were not men of high education, yet educated in the knowledge of God and in Jesus' teaching; and they were ordained to preach the Gospel to the world and to lead men to salvation. From pupils they became teachers; from followers of Christ, they became leaders, bringing people to Christ. They started as disciples and in three years they became Apostles. They spread the presence of Christ in every step of their mission and as it began to grow they appointed their successors, thus establishing the special Priesthood of the Church. In the Orthodox Church there is no ordination of Deacon, Priest, or Bishop without referring to the Apostles.

It is noteworthy that the first official act of Christ was to *call* men as co-workers for the accomplishment of God's will. His selection of men is an example of the *calling* of men by the Church to undertake this divine mission. The Church is the home for those called and who work for its mission. Every Orthodox



Christian is called by God to serve the purpose of the Church with responsibility. All members of the Church share in this responsibility equally as a *Royal Priesthood* working to accomplish the Mission of its Founder.

Is everyone called by God? Yes, every Orthodox Christian is called by God — called to salvation and to service. Some Christians are called to carry out special tasks for God's purpose of redemption.

The Holy Scriptures reveal the idea of *call* to have several meanings. The first and very important is God's call to salvation. In the Gospels, Christ calls sinners to repentance and the weary to

come to Him for rest. The ministry of Christ makes clear that call is related to God's offer of salvation; God called Abraham to be His instrument and promised, *By you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves* (Gen. 12:3). God sent His Son, that *whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16). Though we may profess the doctrines of the Church, we may at the same time be far from Christ. Being active in the Church does not necessarily mean being right with God. Being an Orthodox Christian is not a simple matter. It means that one must be personally and sincerely committed to Jesus Christ.

Continued on the next page.

The Pastor

Continued from page 51.

He calls everyone to make this personal commitment, which must be sincerely rooted in faith, strengthened in prayer and liturgical worship and demonstrated by our Christian stewardship. God's call then reaches every person. When a person responds to that call, the response is not to a particular vocation, but to a particular life of being a part of *God's own people* (1 Pet. 2:9).

A second kind of call is God's call to service. Our Lord was straightforward when He told His first disciples to *follow Me and I will make you fishers of men* (Mark 1:7). They followed Him without asking questions because they had the pure desire to seek the Truth and to accept the Truth and finally to confess and proclaim the Truth. In 1 Peter, the call to service is linked to God's purpose as revealed in the Old Testament and is applied to all Christians, the body of Christ: *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light* (1 Pet. 2:9). This service we are called to perform is our Christian stewardship. It means helping the poor to help themselves, offering social services for the disabled or handicapped, demonstrating a willingness to aid the less fortunate, and so on. Whenever we serve our fellow man, we serve God. We are reminded of our responsibility as Christian stewards on the third of the pre-lenten Sundays when we hear the words of Christ: *Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me* (Matt. 25:40). This statement of Christ makes it imperative for everyone to carry out this commandment of love for neighbor.

From the Scriptures we receive another meaning of the word *call*. God has called individuals to perform special functions to help carry out His offer of salvation. In the Old Testament, Moses was called to lead the people of Israel out of bondage, give them the Law and help establish them into a nation. Other prophets were called to perform special tasks. In the New Testament, we find that Jesus Christ called out His disciples and sent them on special missions to proclaim the good news that the Messiah had come. In many instances those who

were called to special tasks were so designated through a special action of the Church, the *laying-on of hands* as recorded in the *Book of Acts* by the appointment of the seven and the missionary trip of Saul and Barnabas. These rites of designation for special tasks became the basis for the Church's development of the rite of ordination. The Apostles were given the commandment to ordain dedicated and chosen persons. These persons prepare themselves in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, they feel the special calling of God and they dedicate their lives to preach the Gospel, serve the faithful and administer the sacraments. This, in essence, is the calling of the Orthodox Priesthood.

For every Orthodox Priest, the *Gospel according to St. John* (especially John 10) is important to know, as it provides a good perspective of Priest as Pas-

celebrant of the liturgical and sacramental life of the community; Priest as Pastor, the shepherd who cares for his faithful; and Priest as Teacher, the rabbi, who instructs in the doctrine of the Church. All three belong together as one. They are not separated from one another. It is the understanding of the Church that it is pastorship that makes you a Priest and not a Priest that makes you a pastor. Contrary to the Western attitude, the Orthodox vision of the Priesthood does not start at Golgotha, but rather extends back to the creation of man. Man was created as a Priestly being who had a special vocation (Gen. 1) to exercise dominion over the earth as God's representative. Before the Fall, man is the Priest. After the Fall, the natural Priesthood collapsed. Man needs to be restored to Christ, and this restoration in Christ is not in the world as this world rejected this restora-

For every Orthodox Priest, the *Gospel according to St. John* (especially John 10) is important to know, as it provides a good perspective of Priest as Pastor. Christ is Pastor, the Good Shepherd, the One Who lays down His life, and we find the essence of our Priesthood in the words of Christ when He says: *I lay down My life for the sheep* (John 10:15). Of all vocations, the Priesthood is the most paradoxical in the world, as no one naturally lays down his life and yet, as Priests, we are called to follow the example of our Lord.

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Living in a Western society, we are surrounded by Western concepts of the Priesthood. For the Protestants, the Priesthood is teacher and pastor and not a Priest. For the Roman Catholic Priesthood is teacher and Priest and not a pastor. For the Orthodox, Priesthood is teacher, Priest and pastor. The Orthodox Church understands Priest as Priest, the

tion. Redemption and salvation take us out of this world. The Church needs the Priest to lead man to salvation in the Kingdom to come. This is not an easy calling, as the Priest gives up the life of this world, yet, he must completely be in it. Herein lies the paradoxical vocation referred to earlier.

Since the Church needs Priests, are we aware of any signs of the pastoral call? There are general signs, but none of Priestly vocation. There exists no clear definition of pastoral call and we must not be influenced because of our Western approach to worldly matters. The Orthodox understanding of the pastoral call is known only in the depths of a man's conscience, *for what person knoweth the things of a man, except the*

spirit of man which is in him? (1 Cor. 2:11) As Orthodox Priests, we are reminded of this calling from these words of our Lord: *You did not choose Me, but I have chosen you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you* (John 5:16). This is an important text for all Priests to know daily as it shows that Priesthood is a Divine Mystery and not something sought for earthly reasons.

If there are no specific signs, how does a man know his calling? This is almost impossible to answer. Certain signs have accumulated through the centuries, plus the wisdom of the Church. The first of these is a personal calling, an inner voice. One finds a special love for the Church, serving and working for the

Church. He feels good; the Church is his home, he feels the Church as the center of his life. The one who does not love the Church in all its details will not be a good Priest. One who does not love the Church will be detached from the Church. Love for the Church and its liturgical life however, are not the only signs, for if they are, then it is dangerous. When the external liturgical aspect is an object of one's life, then he is a *security risk*. There is nothing more dangerous in the Church than a man like this.

Besides this special love there must be an interest in the work of the Church in the world. We see an ever increasing number of clergy involved actively in political parties and social causes. The Orthodox Priest must not be blinded by the earthly turmoils but "like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, a Priest teaches

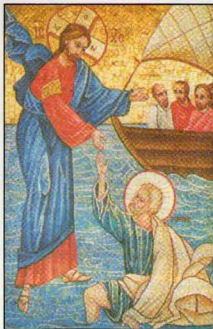
men not what social forms they should adopt, but in what way they should relate to one another in society" (Abp. John [Shahovskoy], *The Orthodox Pastor.*) The real interest of a Priest is spiritual and pastoral and not worldly.

In addition to an inner voice, a call to the Priesthood may come from the outside: another Priest, Bishop or the people. St. Ambrose of Milan was called by the people to serve in the episcopate. He never aspired to be a Bishop, but responded to the voice of the people. The lay believers, who along with the clergy constitute the "conscience of the Church," have the responsibility of contributing to the perpetuation of the Orthodox Faith through their own obedience to the Commandments and Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Continued on the next page.

V O C A T I O N E N C O U N T E R

Is our Lord



*calling you
to the Holy
Priesthood?*

Is our Lord calling you to feed his flock in this special way? To help you to discern His will in your life, on **April 2 and 3 Saint Tikhon's Seminary** is offering a vocations retreat in which you can meet with seminarians, attend talks on the priestly vocation and seminary studies, and pray together with the seminarians in the liturgical services at St. Tikhon's Monastery.

The retreat's schedule of liturgical worship, talks, and informal meetings will offer each participant the possibility to consider very seriously his active role, purpose and responsibilities as a member of the Body of Christ—His Church. A special emphasis is placed on the theme of the calling "to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers of the Lord" (Eph 4:11).

The Pastor

Continued from page 53.

While one contemplates this call, the words in the New Testament bring to mind a rule for the whole life of the Church: *Believe not every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God, for many false prophets have gone into the world* (1 John 4:1). There is a real need for personal inspection while contemplating this call. One needs to ask oneself questions of the type, "Why do I want to be a Priest?" The devil will be present, usually in the form of an angel, when we question ourselves. This personal introspection must be done with the questions answered honestly. Ambition, prestige and other wrong answers have ruined pastoral vocation. Some become Priests just to "be respected." Vainglory, and material interests are also included in the downfall of a pastoral vocation. In general, a life of certain prestige, respect, to be assigned to a certain parish and then do nothing, seem to be an image and concept of many Priests. This is wrong.

Introspection on a daily basis is a *must* for a Priest because he is a born victim. Personal confession on a regular basis will help discern a problem. A can-

didate for the Priesthood undergoes a thorough self-examination for his confession prior to ordination. All Orthodox Christians make confession a regular part of their life, and participating in confession should not stop with the sacrament of ordination. Priests need to confess on a regular basis to check on the weak spots in their life. A Priest must have a growing feeling of unworthiness. The holier the man becomes, the more unworthy he feels. Man is self-centered, proud, and his downfall comes when he centers his

whole and at the same time have this passion of the person's soul. Because of our situation in America, the first Priestly vocation seems to be more in the conscience of the Priest than the second. Archbishop John writes about the Evil and Good Pastorship and the One Pastorship. It does not make any difference what situation, cultural experience or circumstance we are faced with in America. The essence of the Priesthood and its ministry is unchanging and the words of Archbishop John are worth

There are two tendencies in pastoral theology reflecting two types of Priestly vocation. On the one hand there is the Priest as administrator of the parish and the other is the Priest being interested only in the spirituality of the parish and nothing else. Rarely are these two tendencies combined in one man.

life on something else other than Christ. The Church will survive without Priests, but will suffer with bad ones.

When the Priest's life is not centered around Christ, how can he expect to lead others to Christ? As a pastor, he must care for the souls of his flock and care of souls in our times should be greater. When we look at the human person, we fail to relate his or her life to salvation. This is evident in our parishes today, because there is more interest in the "success of the parish." Care of the souls is not dealt with fully in our times and we are suffering as a result of this weakness.

How does one begin to deal with his pastoral work? There are two tendencies in pastoral theology reflecting two types of Priestly vocation. On the one hand there is the Priest as administrator of the parish and the other is the Priest being interested only in the spirituality of the parish and nothing else. Rarely are these two tendencies combined in one man. The paradox of Christ is that He is the Savior of the world and also the Savior of man. Christ is the administrator and when He looks at you He sees you individually, as a unique person. To reduce the Priesthood to either of these two tendencies is completely heretical. The Priest must combine the two things: administration in building the Church as a

reading and studying.

The Church needs dedicated men for the Priesthood — men of piety, sincerity, and humility, and who have the ability to learn the Truths of God and communicate them to the people. The need for Priests was vital in New Testament times and throughout the centuries we have been able to see that the lack of dedicated clergymen was an impediment to the mission of the Church. The challenge is great for young men to open their hearts and minds to the calling of the Priesthood.

Prayer, patience, the sacraments, generosity and humility are all qualities that will keep us going as pastors to meet this challenge. The Priesthood existed before we were born and will exist after we die. God uses us, we do not use Him. It is so easy to fall into despair when we do not see any results in our pastoral work. As a Priest one is not to expect results but always to strive to do one's best. Real priestly grace is to walk in this world and be the witness to the *building* which is not of this world, but of the Kingdom of God.

This is the most frustrating task of our lives, but if we accept this frustration, we will see the joy of the Church in the Kingdom of God.

—Archpriest Eugene Vansuch

The deadline for
the next issue of

Your Diocese Alive in Christ

is February 21, 1999

Please submit all articles
(typed), pictures, parish
news, etc...

to

Alive in Christ

Diocese of Eastern

Pennsylvania

Box 130

South Canaan, PA 18459

Tippy Number Two

Seven-year-old Jack and his family had just moved into a new house in a town far away from their old home. He was lonely, missing his old friends, his old room, all his favorite places he loved to play in. But most of all, he missed Grandpa and his dog Tippy. When Jack would visit Grandpa's farm, he and Tippy had such fun together — chasing rabbits, hunting for woodchucks, hiking through the woods. Tippy even knew when to be quiet so Grandpa and Jack could catch some sunfish in the creek. Now all that would not happen again — at least not for a long time. Grandpa's farm was too far away.

The second week Jack was in his new home, he decided to do some exploring around his new neighborhood, as their house was on the edge of a development of new homes. While hiking through the grass, Jack stopped and listened. He thought he heard something. Yes, there it was again: a whimper — a whining cry, as if something was hurt! Following the sound, Jack soon came upon a poor, bedraggled dog lying under a few bushes where it could keep cool.

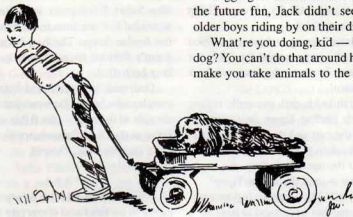
A sadder-looking dog Jack had never seen. Rather large in size, its shaggy coat covered with burrs, bony ribs sticking out of its sides, open sores on its legs with patches of hair gone (either because of fights or the mange — that disease that plagues unloved dogs), his sorrowful eyes pleaded for help as Jack stepped closer to him. Panting because of the heat, the poor dog was close to dying.

Jack's heart skipped a beat. This dog could have been Grandpa's Tippy — if he had been cared for, loved, and fed! He had the same white mark on the end of his tail, just like Tippy. Falling to the ground beside him, Jack spoke kind words to the dog who tried to lick his hand.

You're Tippy, cried Jack, though he realized that couldn't be so. At least I'll

call you Tippy. But what can I do for you here? I need to get you home.

Pulling some crumbled cookies out of his pocket, Jack left these on the ground by the starving dog. Assuring him repeatedly that he would be back, Jack raced through the field to his house.



Screeching to a stop by the patio, Jack suddenly remembered that Mom had gone grocery shopping. Who would help him? Dad wouldn't be home until six, and his big brother Tom was out looking for some summer work! Seeing the little cart Dad used to pick up the grass clippings after he mowed the lawn, Jack grabbed it and started back to the field. Before he got too far he recalled how thirsty the poor new Tippy had been. Dropping the cart, Jack scooted back to the house, took a plastic bowl from the sink and filled an old jar with water. Again on his way, he made tracks as fast as he could to his new friend.

Tippy tried to lift his head to bark when Jack came up to him. How he lapped up the water! His eyes told Jack, Thank you!

After a struggle, Tippy was safe inside the grass cart and Jack headed for home. Walking more carefully and slowly now that his cart had a rather heavy load, Jack began to make plans. Tippy could

sleep in his room with him so that he could take care of the sick dog. Once Tippy was well, they'd soon go exploring as he and the other Tippy had done. Jack was sure this Tippy would know good places to play. What wonderful adventures to come!

Tugging on his load and dreaming of the future fun, Jack didn't see the two older boys riding by on their dirt bikes.

What're you doing, kid — burying a dog? You can't do that around here; laws make you take animals to the pound so

they can be disposed of properly. Can't take any chances with diseases you get from such animals. Better not try, or we'll report you to the police.

Jack tried to reply that his dog wasn't dead, but the two boys just rode on, laughing as they went!

Trudging on through the hot afternoon, Jack never thought that anyone would not want to help Tippy. The poor thing was so miserable and dejected looking! Talking to the dog as they walked, Jack started to tell him about his new room and what fun they would have together.

Opening his gate, Jack saw Tom on the patio, relaxing on the swing and drinking something cool.

What do you have there? big brother Tom called. Something for the dump?

Tom, Tom — look at this poor dog! Help me take him up to my room so I can care for him. He's sick and hot and hungry and . . .

Continued on the next page.

Tippy Number Two

Continued from page 55.

Hey, hold on there, Squirt! You think Mom would allow that mangy mess in the house, much less up in your bedroom? My advice to you is to take that bundle of bones back where you found him and let him die in peace.

Oh, no, Tom! I can't do that! This is Tippy and we're going to be great friends! Please help me!

No way! I wouldn't even get near that mess. Go back to the field with him.

I won't, Tom! I can't! Suppose Grandpa's Tippy was hurt and hungry and sick and no one helped him. I'm keeping him. Get out of my way!

Oh, no, you don't, kid! Mom will flip when she sees this!

Hey, what's going on here, boys? Dad unexpectedly came around the corner of the house as Tom was about to push Jack off the patio!

Jack ran to his dad, excitedly telling him of his finding Tippy, bringing him home in the cart and the plans for nursing him back to health in his room. Dad looked at the upset little boy, the angry big brother — and then — at Tippy!

OOOHHH My — what a forlorn creature! No one has been kind to him for a long time! Let's stop and see what we can do!

Hurry, Dad, Tippy needs help now!

Hold on, little fellow! We'll help, but let's see what's the best way. Food and water — shade and rest — in the garage!

Oh, Dad, Pleeeeease let me have him

in my room. I'll be able to take better care of him there.

NO, young man! Take care of him you may, but out here in the garage.

Jack realized when Dad spoke in that tone he meant it. So he had to be content, but he also knew Dad would help him keep Tippy.

And so the new Tippy stayed with Jack, who patiently nursed him back to health. They became good friends, such good friends that Jack didn't miss Grandpa's Tippy at all.

When Jack had grown a little older, Mother would often laugh as they recalled the story of finding Tippy Number Two. She would say Jack was much like Saint Gerasimus who helped a wounded lion one time in the desert near the Jordan River. The lion became the Saint's faithful friend and helper until they both died.

Dad said Jack reminded him of the traveler who helped the wounded man by the side of the road — the Bible story we know as the Good Samaritan which Saint Luke records in his Gospel.

All of us should take every opportunity to be kind and show pity to anyone in need. Jesus gives us many pictures of His helping others.

If we love Jesus — and say we are His followers — isn't it right that we should follow His example in showing love and care for those around us, especially for those in

trouble, harm, or danger? Jesus wants His children to show love to others — in fact, He expects us to do this!

Let us look about for ways to love and help those around us — not just our family or friends, but those who may have no family or friends — and see what wonderful blessings will happen!

READ FROM YOUR BIBLE:

Luke 10:25-37

Theme verse: But a Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon the man, and when he saw him, his heart was filled with pity (Luke 10:33 TEV).

Something to think about and talk over with your family:

How can we help others?

Who are some people we can help?

Why should we be kind and helpful?

Should we expect pay for helping others?

PRAYER

O Lord Who loves us all and helps more than we know, teach me to be kind and loving, as You are. Help me not to be afraid to reach out to those in need. In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Taken from Building to Last, by Matushka Isabel Anderson, published by St. Tikhon's Seminary Press.

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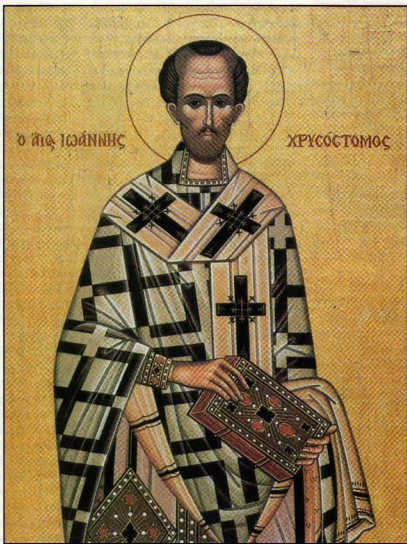
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A Life of St. John Chrysostom



The following is a brief account of the life of St. John Chrysostom, one of the most beloved of all the Saints of our Church, for he truly poured out his life for the spiritual growth and salvation of his flock. This account is taken from the "Biographical Introduction" found in the book entitled Women and Men in the Early Church: The Full Views of St. John Chrysostom, written by Dr. David C. Ford, and published by St. Tikhon's Seminary Press (1996).

St. John Chrysostom was born about A.D. 347 in the great metropolis of Antioch — one of the three greatest cit-

ies of the eastern Mediterranean, along with Constantinople and Alexandria. Robert Payne, in *The Holy Fire*,¹ gives a striking description of Antioch in Chrysostom's day:

"Here the Sun-God had touched the earth, and everything glittered. Here were great palaces, theatres, racing stables, and marketplaces where one could buy silks from China and furs

¹ *The Holy Fire: The Story of the Fathers of the Eastern Church* (Crestwood, N. Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980) is an excellent collection of vivid biographies of the greatest theologians and Church leaders (called Church Fathers) of the Eastern Church — the Church of the Greek-speaking regions of the eastern part of the Roman Empire, including the ancient patriarchates of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople.

from Russia and amber from the Baltic. Running from east to west across the city was a broad avenue four miles long, with marble colonnades paved with red granite, and a host of gold-plated statues in the avenue. . . . Antioch the Great, with the pale green waters of the Orontes flowing through it and high mountains protecting it, glittering in the sun, rich beyond any city of the known world, except perhaps Seleucia on the Tigris, was a place given over to pagan luxury."²

² John's father, Secundus, was a distin-

² Robert Payne, *The Holy Fire*, p. 193.

Continued on the next page.

St. John Chrysostom

Continued from page 57.

gushed military official — magister militum — in the imperial army of Syria. He died when John was still an infant. His mother, Anthusa (meaning “flowering”), quite young and with two young children, decided adamantly not to remarry. Libanius, the great pagan orator who for a while was John’s teacher of rhetoric, praised her after she had spent about twenty years in widowhood: “Heavens! what women there are among the Christians!”³

Anthusa devoted herself to raising John and his older sister. She was able to arrange for him an excellent classical education, since the family was among the lower aristocracy. “He seems to have lived quietly and happily, surrounded by private tutors, on a large estate.”⁴ She also planted deeply within him the seeds of Christian piety.

When John was about fourteen years old, Julian (“the Apostate”) became emperor and moved his eastern headquarters to Antioch, as a base of operations to fight against the Persian Empire to the east. While John was not a completely devoted Christian at this time, he certainly must have shared the misgivings of his mother and of all the Christian population of the city towards this brash, uncouth, young emperor who had spurned his own Christian upbringing, and who was trying to bring back the glories of ancient Rome through a restoration of the old pagan religious life. The Christians did not mourn his death in battle against the Persians two years later (in 363), but John’s teacher, Libanius, delivered a long, glowing eulogy for him.⁵

At the age of eighteen, John suddenly rejected the sophistic, neo-pagan teaching of Libanius. As John’s biographer, Bishop Palladius of Helenopolis, described this change of heart, “He revolted against the sophists of word-mongering, for he had arrived at man’s estate and

thirsted for living knowledge.”⁶ This “living knowledge” he found in Christ, to whom he completely dedicated his life. He began to make regular visits to the great Diodore,⁷ one of the many monks living in the caves high in the hills near the city, who gave him spiritual guidance and theological training. When Libanius was asked on his deathbed whom he wished to be his successor as master of rhetoric in Antioch, he said, “It would have been John, had not the Christians taken him from us.”⁸

After his baptism, John was eager to follow Diodore in the ascetic life of contemplation and prayer in the mountain-caves above the city, but his mother begged him to stay with her, and persuaded him not to make her a widow for a second time.⁹ So he lived a sort of semi-monastic life with her for about nine years, until her death in 374. Meanwhile, he served Archbishop Meletius as an acolyte for three years, and then was appointed as a reader in the Church (c. 371).

Finally, after Anthusa’s death, the archbishop allowed John to live as an anchorite, or hermit, under the guidance of a Syrian elder named Hesychius. At first he lived with moderate asceticism, with a small group of other monks. Then he spent two years in greater isolation, in more rigorous asceticism, rarely lying down, and reading the Bible continually. From poor diet and the cold, he severely injured his health. In fact, he acquired a kidney and digestive ailment which was to plague him all his life.

The ardent young monastic loved this way of life, however, and strongly defended it in his first writings. But by about the year 377, his health was so weakened that he returned to the city.¹⁰ As Palladius writes, “And this is a proof of the Savior’s providence, that he was

taken away from the ascetic life by his sickness brought on by such strict habits, forcing him to leave his caves for the benefit of the Church.”¹¹ It is probable that he was soon made a subdeacon in the Church, and in 381 he was ordained as a deacon by Archbishop Meletius.

In 386 John was ordained into the holy priesthood by Archbishop Flavian, Meletius’s successor. The archbishop immediately gave him the major preaching responsibilities in the Great Church of Antioch. His oratorical training under Libanius served him well, and very soon great crowds were gathering to hear him speak. They were amazed and delighted at his eloquence, and at the fact that he preached without notes!

John’s calling as a preacher was dramatically confirmed early in the following year. On February 26, 387, an imperial edict proclaiming higher taxes was announced in Antioch, and a riot resulted. Statues of the Emperor Theodosius¹² and his family were hideously desecrated by the mob. After order is finally restored, after about three hours of destruction, an eerie silence falls upon the city as it awaits the inevitable imperial reprisals. The people realize that their city deserves extreme punishment, even as those responsible for and most involved in the riot are already being tried and executed.

When John takes the pulpit, he eloquently urges the people to pray that God and the emperor will have mercy. He mourns for the city, yet is glad that in these somber days the Christians of Antioch are dramatically improving their prayer-life and church attendance. He hopes that the people will gain lasting spiritual enrichment from this time of chastening by the Lord. In his next sermon he reflects upon Archbishop Flavian’s overlaid journey to Constantinople to beg mercy from Emperor Theodosius; at the age of eighty, the archbishop is travelling through the snow, making a very arduous journey of eight hundred miles round-trip. Chrysostom urges everyone to pray for Flavian’s success. He continues to kindle

³ Palladius, *Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, 5, R. T. Meyer, trans., *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 45 (New York: Newman Press, 1985), p. 35. Palladius was a close friend of John’s, and was ordained to the priesthood by him.

⁴ This was the famous Diodore of Tarsus (310-390), one of the leading expositors of the Christian Scriptures in his era.

⁵ Reported by the early Church historian Sozomen in his *Ecclésiastical History*, VIII.2 (NPNF, second series, vol. II, p. 399).

⁶ Chrysostom describes this touching scene in his early work, *On the Priesthood*, I.5, Graham Neville, trans. (Crestwood, N. Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1977), pp. 38-40 (NPNF 1, IX, p. 34).

⁷ St. Dimrit of Rossos records various miracles attributed to Chrysostom during the early years of monastic life (*The Lives of the Three Great Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom*, Isaac E. Lambertsen and Xenia G. Endres, trans. [Buena Vista, Colo.: Dormition Skete, 1985], pp. 101-104).

¹¹ Palladius, *Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, 5, p. 35.

¹² Known in history as Theodosius the Great, he ruled the eastern Empire from 379 to 383, and the entire Empire from then until his death in 395 A.D. He is recognized as a Saint in the Orthodox Church.

and nurture his flock's faith in Christ through a series of eighteen more sermons in the following weeks.¹³ St. Dimitri of Rostov remarks in his Life of Chrysostom, "It may be that Lent has never been observed with such strictness, has never been conducted with such a sense of repentance, as enveloped all the inhabitants at that time."¹⁴

By the end of Great Lent, Archbishop Flavian has returned to Antioch with the joyful news that the emperor's wrath has been mollified; the city is spared from his revenge. And John has won the love of the people for his encouragement, wisdom, and fortitude during this time of crisis.

The great preacher stayed in Antioch until 398, faithfully preaching several times each week, and sometimes daily, such as during Great Lent. During his entire preaching career he preached a series of sermons on a substantial number of the books of Scripture, which he interpreted and commented on verse by verse. These homilies were taken down in shorthand by his listeners and organized into commentaries, which are generally considered to be the greatest commentaries ever done in the history of the Eastern Church.¹⁵ Bishop Palladius summarizes this period in his life:

"Then he spent twelve years at Antioch and shed great glory on the priesthood there by the strictness of his lifestyle. Some he salted by his moderation, others he illumined by his teaching, still to others he gave drink from the fount of the Spirit. It was all fair sailing with Christ as pilot when the blessed Nectarius fell asleep."¹⁶

This Nectarius was the Archbishop of

Constantinople, who died in 397. John, the famous preacher in Antioch, is summoned by Arcadius, the new emperor, to replace him. After all, Arcadius thought, shouldn't the greatest church in the Empire — the Church of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) in the imperial capital — be adorned with the Empire's greatest preacher? So John is taken to Constantinople — by imperial guard, after being innocently lured out of Antioch, since Arcadius knows that the hot-blooded, patriotic people of Antioch would never willingly allow him to leave.

In the capital city John is warmly received at first. Empress Eudoxia even participates in a church procession barefoot, and she has long talks with him about spiritual things. But he preaches consistently against the excessive luxury and ostentation of the wealthy, and eventually she takes this personally. He lives very austere, eating by himself, and refusing to provide lavish hospitality for the upper classes, as Nectarius had done, which has now become expected of the archbishop of the imperial city.

Archbishop John soon begins reforming measures — moving against the practice of *synesitakism*,¹⁷ chastening his priests for sloth and avarice, devoting more of the Church funds for charity, and reforming the order of widows — making sure they really are such.¹⁸ They must live soberly, and avoid the public baths. Those who were younger and who felt that they could not endure their widowhood, he encourages to remarry.

The zealous bishop holds nighttime prayers and processions (to preempt those of the Arians¹⁹ still in the city), which upsets certain priests not used to these extra duties. (For the sake of propriety, however, and to assure their safety, the women were urged to pray at home, and not to participate in these events.) Palladius observed,

"Because of all these reforms the

church was flourishing more excellently from day to day. The very color of the city was changed to piety; everyone looked bright and fresh with soberness and Psalm-singing. But the hater of good, the demon, could not bear the flight of those whom he had once enslaved, those whom the word of the Lord had snatched from him by the teaching of John. As a matter of fact, those horse-crazed men and theatre fans had abandoned the courts of the devil and hastened to the fold of the Savior out of love for the piping of the Shepherd who loves His sheep."²⁰

In 402 Archbishop John is invited to help consecrate a new bishop of Ephesus. Once in Ephesus he proceeds to summon a council of seventy bishops, which elects a deacon from Constantinople to be the new bishop instead, and then deposes at least six, and as many as sixteen, bishops convicted of simony (since they were allowing men to buy the office of priesthood from them), incurring their wrath and that of their supporters.²¹

Meanwhile, Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, who had reluctantly participated in John's elevation to the episcopacy at the Emperor's orders, and who harbored typical Alexandrian jealousy of Constantinople,²² sees a chance to move against John in the affair of the Four Tall Brothers. These were monks in the Egyptian desert charged with Origenist heresy²³ by Theophilus and expelled from Egypt. When they flee to Constantinople for refuge, Archbishop John gives them quarters in one of the churches, but is careful not to admit them to sharing in the Holy Eucharist until the matter can be resolved.

To be continued.

¹³ These sermons are called the Homilies Concerning the Statutes, and are available in English in NPNF 1, IX, pp. 317-489.

¹⁴ *The Lives of the Three Great Hierarchs*, p. 109.

¹⁵ These commentaries are on the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, all the letters of St. Paul, Genesis, the Psalms, and portions of other Old Testament books. Chrysostom was probably the first Christian preacher to preach in this way. J. H. W. G. Liebeschütz also observes that with Chrysostom, in contrast to the Greco-Roman philosophical rhetoric of the time, "what was new was the regularity of the Christian sermon, the passion with which moral commands were expounded as divine commandments, and the claim to universal attendance" (*Bishops and Bishops' Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990], p. 172).

¹⁶ St. Dimitri of Rostov records the vision that St. Proclus, Chrysostom's cell attendant and later Archbishop of Constantinople, beheld one evening as he happened to look through a hole in Chrysostom's door: there, bending over Chrysostom and whispering in his ear, was a writing one of his commentaries on the Pauline epistles, was St. Paul himself, whom Proclus recognized from the icon. St. Paul which Chrysostom had on his wall. Where Proclus described all this to Chrysostom, he replied that he had been unaware of any such presence in his room (*The Lives of the Three Great Hierarchs*, pp. 120-121).

¹⁷ Palladius, *Dialogue*, p. 36. St. Dimitri of Rostov also records several miracles attributed to Chrysostom during his years of priesthood in Antioch (*The Lives of the Three Great Hierarchs*, pp. 110-112).

¹⁸ This was the practice of male and female monastics living together in the same house, which was condemned by the First Ecumenical Council, held at Nicaea in 325 (Canon 3). The women living in such an arrangement were known in Latin as *subintroductae*.

¹⁹ Cf. 1 Timothy 5:3-16.

²⁰ Arians believed that Christ was not fully divine; this view was condemned as heretical at the First Ecumenical Council.

²¹ Palladius, *Dialogue*, p. 40.

²² At this time it was unclear whether or not the Archbishop of Constantinople had administrative jurisdiction over Ephesus. The Fourth Ecumenical Council, held in Chalcedon in 451, clearly stipulated the administrative control by Constantinople over "the Pontic, the Asian [i.e., western Asia Minor], and the Thracian dioceses" (NPNF 2, XIV, p. 287).

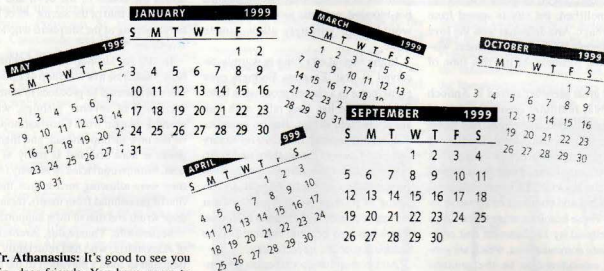
²³ This jealousy resulted partly from the third canon passed by the Second Ecumenical Council in 381, which mandated that "the Bishop of Constantinople, however, shall have the prerogative of honor after the Bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is New Rome" (NPNF 2, XIV, p. 178). Formerly, Alexandria had been second in honor after Rome.

²⁴ Origen (c. 185-254 A.D.) was a brilliant Alexandrian theologian, biblical exegete and translator. But some of his speculations, such as those involving the preexistence of souls, the eternity of the world (instead of creation out of nothing), and a certain deism of the human body, became the basis for several heretical movements in the centuries after his death. Because of this, Origen and his questionable speculations were condemned at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople in 553.

The Four New Years



A Conversation With Fr. Athanasius



Fr. Athanasius: It's good to see you again, dear friends. You have come to give me your Christmas greetings?

Friends: Yes, Father. And we have another question for you.

Fr. Athanasius: I will be happy to respond, if I am able. There is much I do not know. In fact, the older I become, the more I am inclined to agree with Socrates who said that in the last analysis, he knew nothing at all. But what is on your mind?

Friends: Each year in September, you announce to your parishioners that it is New Year. No one seems to pay much attention to that. Now here in winter we all celebrate the New Year on January 1. Why are there two New Years every year?

Fr. Athanasius: This is an interesting question, my friends, and rather complex to answer. But I will make it worse by submitting that there are not two new years each year, but *four*.

Friends: We do not have all day, Father. But please tell us briefly what you mean.

Fr. Athanasius: As you know, very many of our Christian celebrations grew in some way out of Jewish antecedents.

The most obvious are the Jewish Passover (*Pesach*) as the background of our Pascha, and *Shavuot* (the Feast of Weeks) as the background of our Pentecost. Now I am sure you have heard of the Jewish celebration called Rosh Hashanah, New Year. What season of the year does this occur?

Friends: Early autumn — September, October, isn't it?

Fr. Athanasius: Does that not suggest to us that our Orthodox Church's New Year might be based on that antecedent? The Jewish celebration begins on the First of Tishri and includes the reading of the story of Abraham and Sarah and the birth of Isaac. This was a miraculous birth from aged and barren parents. Our first Great Feast of the Year, the Nativity of the Most Holy Virgin, also speaks of the birth of a child from aged and barren parents, and the breaking of that barrenness in the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption. This is the first of the four beginnings or New Years.

Friends: This is very interesting and plausible. But we still do not know why

there are multiple new years each year.

Fr. Athanasius: The human race has gone through thousands of years of history. Many layers of influences linger along the path to the present. The January 1 New Year is obviously a relic from the Greco-Roman period. The very designation of the month January comes from the Roman god Janus, who had two faces, looking at once forward and backward: forward to signify the desire to begin the new year afresh, and backward to show that the new must necessarily bring with it elements and foundations from the old.

Friends: We Christians should not give heed or worship to a false god such as Janus.

Fr. Athanasius: Of course not! As followers of Jesus Christ our winter new year is really marked by the observance of the Christmas-Theophany cycle which celebrates the Birth in the flesh of our Lord, His Baptism, and the beginning of His earthly ministry. The old Roman feast of January 1, we transformed into the Feast of Circumcision, since it marks the eighth day after our Lord's Birth, and

signifies our Lord's intention to submit to the Law of Old Israel. He revealed here as in other moments that He came not to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it.

Friends: Then we should celebrate the feast of our Lord on January 1, rather than these secular elements.

Fr. Athanasius: That's right. Most of what people in our day do on the first hours of this January New Year could rightly be called "neo-pagan." Way back in the fourth century St. John Chrysostom spoke out courageously against the attempts of some Christians to continue pagan celebrations alongside their Christian observances. Concerning the superstition that the first day of January must be spent in riotous feasting and drunkenness in order to have a happy year ahead, he said, "This is extreme stupidity."

Friends: All right, that accounts for two new years. But you said there are two more.

Fr. Athanasius: Let us turn to Judaism again. We find that on the first day of the month of Nisan (corresponding to March-April) there is designated a new year, since this, in the Jewish calendar, is the first month of the year. And on the 15th day of Nisan there begins the eight-day celebration of *Pesach* (Passover), the constitutive series of events which formed the Hebrew people into a nation. This as well as the other major Jewish feasts derived from agricultural celebrations relating to sowing and reaping and offering of the first fruits. Through the years they acquired greater theological meaning as God's People experienced divine mercy and salvation in such experiences as the Exodus.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the New Passover, the "Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." His Death and Resurrection, foreshadowed by the Old Testament events of God's salvation, constitute the foundation and reveal the meaning of our Paschal celebration which is surely the central and most important of the Christian New Years.

Friends: If the Jews have an elaborate celebration at Passover and at Rosh Hashanah as well, which of these two do they consider more important?

Fr. Athanasius: Actually the Rabbis argued long and hard over this question,

but without an ultimate choice. They came to agree that both are of high importance. But in the Christian reckoning and experience, without a doubt the New Year ushered in by our Lord's glorious Resurrection is the central one; in fact our Pascha is not only the beginning of the New Year, but the beginning of the New Creation.

Friends: Father, we would now like to venture a guess as to the fourth New Year — It must be Pentecost.

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Fr. Athanasius: That's right.

Fr. Athanasius: That's right.

Friends: We understand that it is an important feast day, but why is it a new year?

Fr. Athanasius: Because it marks the birth of the most important organism in the world: the Church.

In Judaism *Shavuot* commemorates the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. After the Hebrews were saved from Egyptian bondage, they were still without direction. God Himself led them through the physical wilderness, but He wished to give them a clear and permanent guide for their moral and spiritual life. This was provided in the Commandments given to Moses on Sinai, forming the heart of the Torah. This gift is celebrated on *Shavuot*. One needs both *Pesach* and *Shavuot* to be a true child of God in old Israel.

In the New Israel, one needs both Pascha and Pentecost, the first signifying death and resurrection, the second signifying ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit, to be a member of Christ's Mystical Body. The gift of Pascha is bestowed in each Baptism, and that of Pentecost in each person's Chrismation. Pentecost is therefore the fourth and final New Year.

Friends: We notice that these new

years occur at each of the four seasons.

Fr. Athanasius: An excellent observation! This is not coincidence, but our Lord's loving providence — that our earthly sojourn from season to season may be sanctified by God's grace; that every time and every season may be holy; and that we might through the year be reminded of God's merciful acts to redeem us and bring us from the darkness of sin and death to the light of life.

But the New Year celebrations do much more than simply remind us of God's saving work. They provide opportunities for us to experience the renewal of humans and all creation. In celebrating the seasonal new years we can be personally transformed by the events commemorated. The Feasts enable us, in effect, to transcend time by uniting us to events past and to promises of the future (such as our Lord's coming again in glory) all in the eternal present. Again and again we have the possibility of being purified, illumined, and sanctified by God's redeeming love.

Friends: Then is it right to say, Father, that the four new years, each marking a different season, each with its own specific theme, point to one single overarching theme: God's love?

Fr. Athanasius: Well put, my friends! The Church Year can be viewed, in fact, as one single day: the Day of the great Marriage of God and humanity. Autumn as the sunset — the birth of the Mother of the Bridegroom, as the days grow shorter; winter as midnight — the birth of the Bridegroom Himself at the darkest time of the year; spring as the dawn — the Resurrection and Entrance of the Bridegroom into the Bridal Chamber as the days grow longer and nature returns to life; and summer as high noon — the Bridegroom's being wed to His new Bride, the Church, in the brightness and warmth of the summer sun.

And we can go one step further. As every year is as one day, every day can be filled with all those events we celebrate through the year: the Bridegroom comes and unites Himself with the faithful at every feast, every Divine Liturgy, and at every moment of prayer, forgiving us, enlivening us, and filling us with His transfiguring love.

—Archpriest Theodore Heckman

Presentation for a "Guidelines for Parish Councils"

(Conclusion)

The following is second and concluding part of Fr. John Udics' presentation on parish councils, a report given at the Diocese's 1998 Parish Council Conference. The first part appeared in the previous issue.

Clearly, some of the ideas for our parish administrative structure were borrowed from our Episcopalian benefactors who were lending us the use of their churches, were very involved with ecumenical activity at the time, and who were even soliciting the comments of the Russian Hierarchy on their new *Book of Common Prayer*.

In the Orthodox parishes, because of this new parish structure, it became important to decide who was entitled to vote and who wasn't — and the idea of membership in the parish by virtue of paying dues was born. Until this time, membership in the Church was based solely on baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and participation in the Holy Eucharist. But with the need to raise funds to operate the parish and to determine membership rolls, financial considerations became another factor — and perhaps in too many cases, the only factor — in determining "parish membership."

This also was the time of the beginning of the concept of "parish." Until this time, people thought of themselves as part of the Church of Christ. But as isolated communities were forced to organize, build, fund and even govern themselves (an idea perhaps borrowed from our new democratic homeland), the notion of a parish or congregation (an idea perhaps also borrowed from our Protestant neighbors) the notion of parish began to take precedence over the remem-

brance of being part of the Body of Christ.

St. Patriarch Tikhon, who had been the Archbishop of New York and spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church in North America, brought back with him to Russia when he returned there, the idea of the parish council. The Soviet State turned this into the *dvadtsatka* — "the Twenty," twenty lay persons, appointed by the State, to run the parish. The priest was literally only an employee. The office of starosta continued, but he was also appointed by the State. Since the fall of communism in Russia, the starosta is appointed by the priest. "The Twenty" continues to exist in some places, but they are no longer appointed by the State and are instead appointed by priest. There is no concept of "membership," so democratically governed "parish meetings" are unthinkable.

When the eventual establishment of a united Orthodox Church in America comes to pass, it will be interesting to see how the merger of the various systems of parish and Church government is achieved. There are some parishes where the priest alone is responsible for parish administration, some parishes which use the priest and elder system, others with the parish council system, others where the parish elects half of the parish council and the priest appoints the other half, and others where the Council exists but only as a service organization, without governing authority. The Evangelicals who have recently come into the Orthodox Church organized their parishes according to what they saw in the early Church: many presbyters, deacons and other minor orders in each parish work together to accomplish the task of parish administration.

Now I hope that you begin to see where you parish council officers stand in the "organization" of the Church, and begin to understand the importance of your position, and see that "service" when used in the Church and denoting the work done there in the name of Christ, is not a word that diminishes anyone. I hope also that you realize how important it is for us to teach those on the parish council the meaning and history of their work, the importance of their function and the necessity that Council officers do their work well, with understanding and confidence, carrying out the Scriptural commands and teachings of our Lord.

Contemporary "continuity and discontinuity"

The work done in the early Church is the same work that is done in the Church of today, but not by the same people as in the O.T. Temple and in the N.T. Church. Take for example, the vanished order of doorkeepers. We need a ministry of doorkeepers, not to keep people out, but to welcome and greet everyone who comes through our doors. These people can be responsible for greeting newcomers, getting them a book so they can follow the service, inviting them to the coffee hour, making their presence known to the priest who can welcome them from the amvon at the end of Liturgy, and for making sure that they are contacted again in a day or two and invited to return. They can also, later, see to it that the newcomers are invited to participate in the work of the parish — in the choir or the kitchen, or the Church School.

Given the emptiness of modern life, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if Chris-

tians were organized to teach people, especially young people, how to deal with the threats against them, teaching them holiness, reverence, respect, and goodness as well as maturity, responsibility, bravery, honesty, and every other moral tool to solve the problems they encounter and to help others with similar problems? Isn't this what our Lord was talking about when He commanded us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty and visit the sick? This is what the deacons and deaconesses did in the earliest centuries of the Church. Given the terrors of modern life, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing for the Body of Christ to operate a place where our young people could find sanctuary and support in dealing with temptation and threats to their purity, integrity, and sanity? This is what the order of virgins did in the earliest times. Given the loneliness of modern life, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing for those who take their name from Christ to provide living space where widows could live together and share their lives, not only helping each other, but turning outward and doing good works in the community? This is what the widows did in the time of the beginnings of the Church.

The ancient orders of the earlier Church — deacons, deaconesses, widows, virgins, doorkeepers, readers, catechists, cantors — can all be revived to the benefit of the Church in our times.

Who is Qualified to Serve?

Who qualifies for this service, this ministry in Christ to the People of God? The Book of Acts clearly tells us who were eligible to be chosen as deacons, and Saint Paul's first Epistle to Saint Timothy gives instruction on who is eligible to be chosen a bishop or a deacon. These qualifications should also be applied to *everyone* who desires to be a minister, helper, server, assistant, parish council officer, and so on.

"Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty" (Acts 6:3, emphasis added here and in ff.).

"I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with

braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire but by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion. (Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.)" (1Tim. 2:8-15).

"The saying is sure: If any one aspires to the office of Bishop, he desires a noble task. Now a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money. He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way; for if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil; moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders, or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for gain; they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then if they prove themselves blameless let them serve as deacons. The women likewise must be serious, no slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husband of one wife, and let them manage their children and their households well; for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1Tim. 3:1-13).

Another important source for those preparing to enter into service in the Church, whether to the priesthood or to ministry in *diakonia* (ministry, service) or stewardship, whether by ordination or by election to a committee, is St. John Chrysostom's six books *On the Priesthood*.

We also offer this quote from the Statutes of the Orthodox Church in America, from Article VII, Section 7b (in the section concerning qualifications of Lay

Delegates of the Diocesan Assembly): "Like all holders of all offices in the Church, he may not be a person under ecclesiastical interdiction, who is in violation of moral standards, who is married outside the Church, who is a member of anti-Church and / or secret societies."

Eligibility for Parish Council Officer

Who is eligible for this position? My dad used to call everyone who was an expert in a job he didn't know anything about a shoemaker. The truth is that we, in the Church, often call on such a "shoemaker" to fix the pipes, balance the books, fill out the tax forms, and so forth, and then we blame them for botching the job.

Standing alone, an administrative structure in the style of the early Church, or based on corporate law are probably not adequate for Church and parish administration today. In order to cope with all that our current life demands of us, our parishes need all sorts of professional workers to help us deal with all the questions about law, medicine, psychology, management, accounting, as well as all the other workers in every other area in Church life. In other words, we need the help, input and direction of lawyers, doctors, psychologists, management specialists, grandmothers, bakers, plasterers, plumbers, seamstresses and tailors — there's need of everyone's offering, ability and talent.

"Of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom"

Just as in the past, workers in the Church today need to measure up to those apostolic requirements for clergy as we read about in the Book of Acts: "... of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom."

Therefore — we *must* train and educate those elected to office on the parish council. Before a priest administers the Oath of Faithful Service to new council members, he should meet with them and review and discuss the history and reasons for Church organizational structure presented above, and see how they are reflected in the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America.

Such educational sessions might follow a format like this:

Continued on the next page.

“Guidelines for Parish Councils”

Continued from page 63.

After an opening prayer and introduction, review the history of ecclesiastical structure.

First consider erroneous views of the Church: that She is solely a corporation; that the priest is an employee of the parish; that the president of the council is the head and “CEO” of the parish; that the Church is a democracy.

Next, examine how the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church has been organized since her beginnings; how she grew and spread; relationship of Bishop/Priest and local community; Church as “the Body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:27).

Thirdly, look at the history of the parish council: how the early parishes were organized; the Orders of the Church; how the Orthodox Churches in Russia were organized (as in other lands); development of the *Dvatsatka*; how the parish council, only in America, came to be organized; that they were based on Episcopalian, democratic, and corporate law models.

Then review the Statute of the O.C.A., focusing on certain articles: VI, 4: the Diocesan Bishop; VI, 9: Qualifications; VI, 10: Election; VI, 12: Missions; X, all sections: the Parish.

We would finish by reviewing parish bylaws and the parish council Oath of Office and procedures.

Members of the parish council should all be urged to read Bishop Kallistos’s (Timothy Ware’s) *The Orthodox Church* or Fr. John Meyendorff’s *The Orthodox Church*. Required reading should include *The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America* and the parish’s Bylaws, and these things should be explained and taught by the priest to newcomers. Those who want to know more should be urged to read *Orthodox Christian Meetings and Oriented Leadership*, and *Priest, Parish & Renewal* by Metropolitan Emilianos.

Duties of the Parish Council

The *Statute of the Orthodox Church in America* in section X:8:d states: “The Parish Council shall be responsible not only for the spiritual and material needs of the Parish, but also for the Parish’s unity and connection with the Diocese and the Church, for each Parish is called

to be a living cell and member of the Body of Christ, and each carries responsibility for the whole Church.”

The Council’s job is to lead and organize the people in helping the priest to do his appointed work of preaching, teaching, visiting the sick, and administering the parish. The Council supervises the physical plant of the Church so the priest need not worry about it. The priest has a responsibility to the parish, to the diocese, to the national church, and also to the community of people living near and around the parish church and to the city and state as well, even to the national government. The parish council, as the leaders of the parishioners, shares that responsibility. When a parish operates in isolation, not considering its connection to the deanery, to the diocese, to the Orthodox Church in America, and to the worldwide Orthodox Church, this is called *congregationalism* — something which is not, and never was, part of our Orthodox Tradition. We are all members of Christ’s Body in the old meaning of the word “member” — an organ, a part of the whole: as fingers and hands, hearts and lungs are members and organs of the body, we are members and organs of the Body of Christ and cannot exist if we are cut off from that Body.

Also, as the priest must be obedient to the teachings of the Holy Fathers, to the Canon Law of the Orthodox Church compiled from the decisions of the Ecumenical and Local Councils, to the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America and to the newly published “Guidelines for Clergy,” to diocesan bylaws and to the parish bylaws, and, as the legal head of the parish “corporation,” to United States and local corporate and civil laws and codes, each and every officer of the parish council must also be aware and cognizant of all these things, and be every bit as obedient to them.

Which Way Do We Face?

Congregationalism is a serious threat to the orthodoxy of the spiritual life and health of our parishes. Instead of facing inward, taking care of ourselves and ignoring those around us, we need also to learn to face outward, to the deanery, the diocese, the national church, to the worldwide Orthodox Church, and to the community in which we live. Mission work is not something that others do, but

something which we must do in order to live up to the command of Jesus to “Go and baptize all nations,” as well as for our own future and parochial and personal spiritual growth. It is interesting to note that some Protestant denominations and parishes allot half of their budget for missions, and often that amounts to \$100,000 per year!

For decades, the Mormons averaged 700 missionaries per year in Russia. The Jehovah’s Witnesses have been in Russia since 1915. When Communism fell in Albania and the country opened up, the Moslems sent in 400 foreign missionaries, the Protestants and Catholics also sent hundreds, and the Orthodox — sent 4. International mission of the Church is as much a part of the parish’s life as is the internal national American mission work.

If we are going to grow in our parishes, we must learn the lessons of turning outward as well as looking inward. This lesson is one our Lord teaches us: when we cast our bread on the waters, it will return to us a hundred times greater, in heavenly rewards promised by our Father.

Conclusions

The “Oath of Faithful Service” for the installation of parish council officers says:

Beloved Brothers and Sisters: you have been duly elected councilors of this Parish. Your office is sacred by reason of its importance not only to this Parish’s welfare, but to the extension of the Kingdom of God. Your office gives you the opportunity to serve that Kingdom. May you be faithful stewards for the Lord God in the dedication of your time and talents to the welfare of His holy Church.

Lord God, Heavenly Father, who in Your good and beneficent care for Your Church have given to this Parish men and women willing to serve it for Your sake, grant these Your servants, we beseech You, the gifts of Your Holy Spirit that they may give themselves wholly to the service to which they have been called, with all fidelity, reverence, sincerity and singleness of mind. Let Your blessing descend upon this Parish, and so lead and direct it by Your Spirit, that it may be a Church holy and without blemish. For You are a merciful and man-loving God, and to You we render glory,

to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Almighty God, one in the Trinity, who has called you to the service of His Church, bless you, enlighten you, and strengthen you in your service, that you may prove good and faithful stewards, to the glory of His all holy Name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

It is impractical to think that parish councils in this country will be abolished, as that system is now long established in American Church life, and too many involved legal questions would arise. To return to the way of doing things of the early Church, where all the ministers of the parish were in the ranks of the clergy and under orders, is not realistic.

But it is not at all impractical to change our current situation to bring it in line with the Church's history and with Jesus' teaching and commands.

Let the Priest be the *proistamenos*, the *predstoyatel*, let him be the president of the parish as he should be. This puts the question of authority back into perspective.

What is the ministry of the parish council? It is a ministry of *diakonia*, a deaconate, a ministry of service, which

is most often translated as "stewardship." Who were the stewards, and what were their functions? They were managers of the property of others, fulfilling their function especially in the absence of the owner. We Christians are called to be the stewards of God's property here on earth, doing His work as co-workers and sons and daughters and friends in His absence. But in some places, wicked stewards are taking over, and the man who "dugged" the winery is being put out of the vineyard, as are his sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters. We must remember the warning in the Gospel about those who usurp authority and position and power. Instead of acting as stewards, too often we behave like the robbers who come in to take what is not theirs. Remember the warning of our Lord. He asks: "When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons?" (Mat 21:40-41).

Council officers of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, must be enlightened co-workers with Christ in order to lead. In business, one has to have training in one's field before one can be

hired, and be tried out in a position before one obtains advancement. Unfortunately in our times in the Church people who are totally unqualified for a job can be elected to positions of authority. In the Church — let the businessmen be the treasurers, let secretaries be the parish council secretary, let teachers and other professionals become involved with the Church school, and so on. Let people understand that the oath they take replaces ordination and that their position is a serious and blessed calling, and let them be knowledgeable in the teachings of our Lord, and be aware of the history of the jobs they assume. The positions they accept are positions given by God, and they will be answerable to God for their behavior, not to their "constituents" . . .

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—Archpriest John Udics

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Bright Friday - April 16, 1999

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Helen Medar

Mary Ann Scarnulis
Julia Seman
Margaret Holdra

Frank Gingo
Mary Kosciusko
Sam & Mary Stanchak

Ferdorko Family
Wanda Wanko
Eva Souchick

Frank Thorich
Beatrice Kowalskie
Margaret Yankoski

Helen Yakowe
Marie & Peter Souchick
Mr. & Mrs. Van Berg

Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Gingo
Michael Luhachuk
Ben & Lucille Dragan

Stephen Wartella Jr.
Ted & Helen Bischak
Marion Crane

Ann Slavinski
Helen & George Piskorik
Michael Harmanos

Nettie Swanko
Julia Capp
Sandra Williams

Lorraine Amer
Mary Cunyar
George Hack

Mr. & Mrs. Merowesky
Olga Morgans
Mary Nickett

Jean R. Kutzer
Parson's Family
German Family

Bixler Family
Peter Kutzer Jr. & Family

HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

Frackville

V. Rev. Paul & Matushka Ropitsky
Sophie Osenbach
Mr. & Mrs. John Podany

Olga Chrusch
Sergius Chrusch
Anna Bendinsky

Mary Torick
Michael Dyszel
Anna, Val, Renee Eippert

Paul Mecvitz
Mary Krutz
Michael & Anna Dikun

Olga Williams
Andrew Smarkanic
Anna Jordan

Carole Sagan
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Pelak
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Pelak

Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Walch
Mr. & Mrs. John Semanich
Vera M. Timko

Helen & Myron Polanichyk
Sophie & John Pellock
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Bricker

Dr. Mrs. MaryLou & Robert Bricker & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Shawn Kane & Family

Mr. & Mrs. Midge Paulonis
Greg & Rita Tatusko
Michael Kasmer

Mary Diffenderfer
Larissa Holowaty
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Holowaty

Christ is Born!

Peter & Marie Weremedic
Peter Weremedic Jr.
Michael, Roseann, Elizabeth, Michael Jr. Weremedic
James, Lisa & Jimmy Weremedic

Catherine Motz
Mary Zokuskie
Mary Tschent
Dr. James & Olga Hresko
Jack & Sandra Morrash and Sons
Theresa Basara
Rose Rounds

Paul & Martha Malinchok
Mas Parano

William & Mary Keysack
David, Gregory, Daniel Keysack
Laura Polinsky
Anna Dudash
Anna Andrusichen

Zachary, Nicholas, Gregory & Christopher Wilson

Olga Chuma
Christine Varanka

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Martin
Paul Martin

Mei Martin
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Fletcher

Kitty & Mike Kopey
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Swoboda

John & Margie Oris
Margaret Kuchta

Julia Beltrami
Vera & Par Klemm

Mrs. Eva Cuttic
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Zimmerman

Dr. Paul Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Thomas Sr.

Mike & Helen Onuskanich
Michael Ropitsky

Peter Rachko
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Dura

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Cuttic
Alex & Anna Peleschak

Stephen Peleschak
Nancy & Anna Souchak

Marge Pasquali & Family
George & Mary Reed

Ann Sedar
Kay Sedar

John Kost
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Boniscavage

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Buchanan & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Trynosky

Mary Burcko
Barbara Examitas

Jacob John & John Dylon Pellock

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

Gradyville

V. Rev. & Matushka John J. Perich

Taisia & Alexandra Perich
Olga Pichay

John & Sonya Perich
LuAnn & Don Motel

Reader George & Anastasia Plisko
John Krowzow

Peter, Mark, Nita, Harris Siciliano
Eleanor Bryan

Serge & Svetlana Tagiykoff
Leroy & Eugenia Hughes

Toni Novak Barnett
Bill & Jeanne Sokurenko

Genie Horsky
John, Dina & Amanda Prokop

Reader Gregory, Sharon, Katya & Alexander Hubiak
John & Molly Smush

Dave & Helen Glovach
Reader Oleg & Jean Dudkin

Nettie Stulpin
Deborah Stanton

Walt Chernous
Alexis Campbell

Elizabeth, Madeline & Robert Campbell
George, Danielle & Larissa Pahomov

Tamara Pahomov
Anastasia Jabkowski
John, Patti, Erin & Christopher Lynch
Ann & Martin Kelley & Family
Anna Woodring

Suzanne Hammerer & Family
Mr. & Mrs. George Taylor & Sons

Millie Spokil
Bill & Mary Kessler

Tom, Debbie & Emily Bradley
Matushka Mary Fedoronko

Claire & Maryellen Brown
Alan & Nancy Pesolyar

Josh, Kassie & Maggie Naibel
Stephen M. Seasons

CHRIST THE SAVIOUR ORTHODOX CHURCH

Harrisburg

Father Dan & Theodora Ressetar
Father Michael & Olga Kovach

Subdeacon Richard & Shirley Hathaway
Mr. & Mrs. James Antonio & Sons

Nathalia Borozny
Dan & Donna Bretz

Mr. & Mrs. S.E. Barbu
John R. Barnes

Margaret Balog
John Caba, Jr.

George Cvijic
Grayson & Gage Cvijic

Jerry & Ann Cole
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Drebrot

Paul J. Dotsey
Suzanne Demchak

Dave & Diane Dugan
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Dotsey

Betty Danko
Pauline & Joseph Fetso

Brian Fetso
Angelina Georgias

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Haddings & Family
Elizabeth Stefero Howe

Ron & Libby Hancher, Sr.
Paul, Helen & Sasha Henry

Mr. & Mrs. George Kaznowsky
Gary & Carol Kneiss

Lauren, Rachel & Elizabeth Kneiss
William & Ruth Kantor

John & Lydia Kachur
Alysha & Kristina Kachur

Mr. & Mrs. Adam Mallick
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Malick

Timothy McMahon & Family
In memory of E. Thomas McMahon

Dave & Cheryl Martin
Sue B. Mandell

Katharine Macut
Dr. Joseph & Barbara Norato & Family

The Nesko Family
Evelyn Onufer & Mother Mary

Mr. & Mrs. John Osuch, Jr. & Sons
Nick Pestrock

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Pellegrini
John & Elizabeth Patnychuk

Joseph Russian
Nicholas Ressetar

Greg & Candi Ressetar
Alexander Ressetar

Sophia & Dimitri Ressetar
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Sass

Larry & Megan Smith
Bill & Irene Suple

Mr. & Mrs. Nick Sutovich
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Sutovich, Ryan & Adam

Dr. & Mrs. Kevin Sutovich
Sysak Family

John Nadzia Schilling

John, Natalie & Nick Schilling
Leonid & Lyudmila Sivak
June Taleff

Helen Tatusko
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wood & Family

Mildred & Susan Wolfe
Helen Yannoni

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zuro & Family

ST. MICHAEL'S RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Jermyn

Fr. John & Matushka Kowalczyk, Sophia & Nicky
Fr. Gabriel & Matushka Petorak

Charlie & Sandy Arnold
Debbie & Barry Bernosky & Family

Wendy & Serge Bochnovich & Family
Mary Bowan

Willard & Sue Brown & Family
Ed & Eileen Brzuchalski

Dave & Ann Butler & Cindy
Sandra & Kevin Carney

Eileen & Bob Dance
Eva Demchak

Dolores Drater
Kay Fedirko

Donald & Rosalie Fives & Family
Annabelle Franckh

Peter & Delores Frenchko
Joseph Getzie

Nicholas Getzie
Peter Getzie

Bessie Guzey
John & Lucille Guzey

Andy & Dorothy Hanchak
Bill & Joan Hanchak

Julia Hanchak
John & Debbie Jaye & Jonathan

Olga Jaye
Dorothy Kecklak

Rose Kelechawa
Julia Kitchura

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Klapatch & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mikulak

Henry II & Jeremi Korpusik
Mary & Henry Korpusik

Mrs. Eva Krenitsky
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Krenitsky

Irene Kuplinski
Daria Lehman

JoAnn & Sam Mattise
Tom Meredith

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Michalczyk
Roxanne & Miles Neutts

Justine Orlando
Antoinette Petorak

Marilyn & George Petorak & Joshua
Andy & Peg Petrilak

Martha Pollock
Willard Puzza

Mary Rusinik
Martha Scopelliti

John Sernak
Mary Sernak

Mr. & Mrs. Paul W. Sernak
Ron, Lorraine & Ann Sernak

Delores Serniak
Steven Serniak & Allison

Gloria Shaw
Anastasia Sloat

Marilyn & Jerry Soroka & Family
Gene Strosky

John Susko
Irene Swirdovich

Chap. Col. Peter and Matushka Telencio
Damian & Stephen Telencio

Bob, Millie & Rebecca Teip
Yvonne & John Wargo & Family

Michael & Mary Wyzlak
Joseph Zaccone

Julia Zaccone
Peter Zaccone

Mary Zielski
Betty Zrowka

ST. VLADIMIR'S ORTHODOX CHURCH**Lopez**

Hieromonk Michael (Thier)
 Mary Kravetz
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kachmarsky
 Craig Kachmarsky
 Helen Fullerton
 Emily Andrew Lavage
 Mrs. Nicholas Kachmarsky
 Rosemary Kachmarsky
 Mrs. Mary Saxe
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Matychak
 Mrs. Helen Dennis
 Mrs. Rosalie Burke
 Mr. Robert Rodka
 Mrs. Olga Rodka
 Mrs. Mary Christini
 Mrs. Alice Dworsky
 Mr. & Mrs. John Caccia
 In Memory of Mary Nedoff
 In Memory of Michael McCobin
 Mrs. Stefie Neuffer
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael John Gulich
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul St. Germain
 Mrs. Vera Gulich
 Mr. & Mrs. George Ferik
 Mrs. Mary Serecsko

HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH**Lykans**

V. Rev. & Matushka Sonya Evans
 Rt. Rev. & Matushka Ann Marie Slovesok
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hrinia
 John & Nancy Coles
 John M. & Chris Coles
 Ann Mahoney
 Anna Kopko
 Anna Hand
 Michael Leshko
 John & Mary Mehaliko
 William & Susan Pinkerton
 Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Pianovich
 Dr. & Mrs. Paul A. Pianovich
 Alex & Stephen Pianovich
 Joe & Pattie Welsh
 George Tiazkun

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH**McAfee**

Rev. Theodore Orzolek
 Daniel Oneschuck
 Anna Mae Kuklis
 Mary Ann Graino
 Irene Yaworsky
 Paul Simerkanich
 Michael & Jan Kurtz, Jr. & Son
 Pearl Elko
 Sam Kurtz Sr.
 Michael & Anna Kurtz Sr.
 Michael Klesh
 Michelle Klesh
 Julie Forte
 William Tazzaker
 Anna Lee Davidovich
 Greg & Cathy Kurtz & Children
 Mary Stronko
 Helen Cortez
 Joe & Linda Kurtz & Sons
 Lonnie Polli
 Helen Douch
 Sophie Sherman
 John Downie
 Michael Zabituck

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**Miersville**

Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak
 Natalie Hatrak
 Madeline Bonchak

Glorify Him!

John Bonchak
 Olga Kirkauskas
 Dave & Georgine Studlack
 Harry, Peggy, Dave & Janine Oakill
 John Brinich
 Rick, Lynda, Lauren & Ricky Hutton
 Michael, Lisa & Christian Pascuzzo
 Ralph & Kathy Brinich & Family
 Elsie Herman
 Mike, Barb, Kathy & Cassandra Rogers
 Michelle & Russ Charowsky
 Mr. & Mrs. Luke Oakill
 James & Anna Antonio
 Stablum Family
 Susie Frew
 Malusky Family
 Anna Wyslutzky
 Mary Wartella
 Sonya & Ed Bosack & Family

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH**Mount Carmel**

V. Rev. Michael & Matushka Evans & Michael
 Catherine Hardnock
 Dorothy Beckus
 Mildred Treftgar
 John & Theresa Pochekalio
 Anna & Dolores Wislock
 Bill & Geri Wislock
 Brian & Gloria Evert
 Helen Stone
 Anna Panikarchuck
 George Panikarchuck
 Amelia Markovich
 Leon Markovich
 Mrs. Anna Gondal
 Mrs. Mary Moroz
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Yonkovic
 Olga Berkoski
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Chidovich
 Walter Sebasovich
 Sandra Sebasovich
 Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Zbicki
 Florence Bubernak
 Margaret Olaf
 T. Alekseyko
 Bob & Marie Kuchta
 H. Tempko
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Yastishak
 Helen Sorocka
 Costy Melnick
 Joseph Buckwash
 George Bortnichak
 Adam Leschinsky
 Julia Butshick
 Jean Mathias
 Julia Barnes
 Chris Buchkarik
 Mary Kandrot
 Anna Grivnovics (Kowalchick)
 Ewam Shamus
 Charles & Pat Tempko
 Valentina Wood
 Pearl Winnick
 Stephanie & Zackery Peek
 Mrs. Marie Cuff
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Paduhovich

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH**Nanticoke**

Fr. & Matushka Stephen Karaffa
 Olga Carvey
 John Pihanich
 Paul & Olga Sulewski
 Jay & Marge Sokol
 Mary Zupko

Joe Paprota & Children
 Mary Hunchar
 John & Theresa Kias
 Joe & Mary Paprota
 Elizabeth & Peter Hetman
 Peter & Patricia Truszkowski
 Peter Wasenda & Family
 Mike & Pearl Zupko
 Warho Family

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH**Old Forge**

Father David & Matushka Karen Mahaffey
 Nikolas, Michael, Seth & Kyra Mahaffey
 Mary Adamiak
 Tillie Augustine
 David, Katie, Alexa & Adam Barsigian
 Jacob & Margaret Barsigian
 John & Sandra Barsigian
 Tony, Suzi, Sierra & Carla Belizenzi, Jr.
 Tony Belizenzi, Sr.
 Jon & Anna Marie Black
 Agnes Buranich
 Helen Chesniak
 Mr. & Mrs. William Condon
 The Cushner Family
 The Elko Family
 Dennis, Maria & Jacob Emily
 Nicholas Ermolovich, Esq.
 Walter & Ann Marie Ermolovich
 Neal & Ann Freeman
 Mrs. Nicholas Halchak
 Harrison Hubiak
 Mr. & Mrs. Alex Jadick
 David Jadick
 Michael & Margaret Jadick
 Mr. & Mrs. John Jadik
 Danny Jones
 Mr. & Mrs. Al Krenitsky
 Gregory Krevko
 Justine Ludwig
 Joseph & Ann Marie Maciujowsky
 Helen Percy
 Ann Peregrin
 Lovie Peregrin
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Polanchik
 Theresa & Helen Polanchik
 Walter & Margaret Pregmon
 William & Mary Pregmon
 Mr. & Mrs. Al Pritchky
 John & Irene Pritchky
 George & Mariyam Serniak
 Stephen & Amanda Serniak
 Stephen & Ingrid Serniak
 Charles, Marie & Mark Sigman
 Michael Spitko, Jr.
 Pauline Spitko
 The Tumavitch Family
 Ann Tyrpak
 Jean Wasko
 Mildred Wozniak
 Steve, Judy & Tracy Yokimistyn
 Anna Zupko

ALL SAINTS ORTHODOX CHURCH**Olyphant**

Rev. & Mrs. Nicholas Wyslutzky
 Pearl Beckage
 Mr. & Mrs. Brian Brown & Son
 Helen Broyer
 David & Mary Brzuchalski
 Nicholas & Alexis Brzuchalski
 Stephanie Butchko
 Mr. & Mrs. Eric Davitt & Sons
 Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert
 Irene Glowatz
 Nicholas & Marie Hollowatch
 Justine Horbuz
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Krushinski
 Mary Kuhar
 Michael & Amelia Kuzniak

Christ is Born!

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Mazur
Fran Meholich
Greg Meholich DDS
William Mezik & Katherine Mezik
Claudia Mikulak
Mary & Maria Oles
Olga & Vera Paulishak
Mr. & Mrs. George Perczynsky
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Prestys Jr. & Sons
Barbara Puhalla
Ashley Puthorsky
Mr. & Mrs. John Puthorsky
Marguerite Puthorsky
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Schlasta Jr. & Family
Mr. & Mrs. George Scocchia & Family
Joe, Helen, Anna & Christina Semon
Jim & Donna Specht
Kyra, Chelsea & Ian Specht
Dan, Susan & Samantha Stafursky
Ken Stafursky
Steve & Pat Stafursky
Linda Stuchlak
Michael Stuchlak Sr.
Mary Waslichak
Joachim & Simeon Wyslutsky

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Olyphant
Fr. & Matushka Vladimir Fetcho
Jonathan, James, Julie & Richard Cesari
John & Josephine Chichilla
Paul & Sylvia Dreaier
Tatiana Dreaier
Capt. & Mrs. Paul Dreaier Jr.
Dorothy Fetchina
Joseph Fetchina
Kyra Fetchina
Olga Fetchina
George Grabania
Marie Grabania
Michael Grabania
George Havriak & Family
George Kopestonsky
Olga Kuzmick
Tom & Vera Price
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Rebar
Dr. & Mrs. Larry Sherman
James Thomashefsky
Helen Thomashefsky
Mary Youshock

ST. STEPHEN'S ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL

Philadelphia
Father Daniel & Matushka Mary Geeza
Mr. & Mrs. Igor Bergners
Mary Birsenbach
Ron & Kathy Bisaga
Antonina Bolotova
Sonia, Dan, Stephen & Christine Bondira
Anna Burdziak
Anna Cebular
Paul & Andra Chalakis
Judy, Jack & Jennifer Clyde
Charles & Halina Colter
John, Kate, Nicholas, Alexander & Andre Cox
Nicholas Cronin
Dorothy Crossan
Willis & Lubie Dietrich
Reader Daniel & Taisa Drobish & David
Dr. George & Pamela Engleson
Elaine Ezzow
Barbara, Katie & Patrick Fagan
Matushka Mary Fedoronko
Orest Fedoronko
Paul, Diane, Laura & John Fedoronko
Bill, Nina, Kathie, Michael & Matthew Gavula
Olga & John Gasak
Elena Grabania
Lester Grabania & Paul
Mike & Jennie Harb

Annie Michael Hargrave
Joe & Ann Herrschaft
Nicholas & Nina Horsky
Arnold, Katherine, Anna & Alexa Jensky
Harold & Lorraine Kane
Alice Karpjak
Nadia Kolesnik
Mr. & Mrs. John Kolesnik Jr. & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kolesnik & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family
Annette Kopicstansky
Bill Kraftican
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Kuzmen
Lydia & Greg Kuzmenchuk
Anastasia LaMacchia & Kristen
Martha & Peter Linski
John & Ceal Lisovitch
Lydia Magee & Matthew
Sonia, Larissa & Michael Mariani
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Merduszew
Walter & Mary Mokriszi
Lev & Adele Mozhaev
Janice Nass
Rose Neher
Joe O'Brick & Kerri Irene
Olga Dprouseck
Catherine Paulasack
Helen Plunkett
Heinz & Tamara Poessi & Paul
Stephan & Margaret Pron
Larissa & Stephan Pron
Pron-Zwick Family

Thomas, Nina, Nicholas & Deanna Rapak
John, Denise, Sonia & Michael Rowe
Olga Russin
Anne D. Simpson
Joseph C. Simpson
Larry, Connie, Jon & Chris Skvir
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Stephanowich
Zachary Stephanowich & Tatiana
Bob Tallick
Dr. Michael, Amelia, Michael & Natalie Tapytkoff
Lydia Tichy
Torresdale Flowers
Anita Vilagorsky & Robert Waterstradt
Eva & Bill Wassar
Diane, Vincent, Nicholas & Kristina Zanghi

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

St. Clair
Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak
Natalie Hatrak
Tusha Dernbach
Leah Chrusch
Sam Wisnosky
Joan Wisnosky
Steve R. Pelak
Jim & Rutham Kerick
Ted & Jeanette Sagan
Reader Gregory Sagan

ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

Shillington
Rev. & Mrs. John A. Onofrey
The Parish Council
The Sunday School Teachers & Students
The Our Lady of Kazan Sisterhood
The Parish Choir
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Anderson & Family
Ms. Louise Coleman
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Dougherty & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Drosdak
Mr. William M. Dudash
Mrs. Gloria Duty & Sons
Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson Gore & Family

Bill & Rosalie Hardman
Terry & Debbie Hojnowski
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hyland
The Kawood Family
Mrs. Eva Kopers
Mary Koran & Family
Dr. & Mrs. Vadim Kurjanowicz
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Kusior
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Leard & Family
Mr. John Lorchak
Michael & Vera Losk
Mrs. Deborah Lucas & Michael
Mrs. Irene Lupco
John, Dana & Raymond MacKoul
Michael & Janice Mallick
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Melniczek
Dr. John Melniczek
Mr. & Mrs. Karl Osterberg
Mrs. Alexandra Prawdocki & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Reba & Family
Mrs. Ruth M. Ruth
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Savage
Mr. & Mrs. John Seman & Family
Ms. Sandra Semion
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family
Ms. Gloria Spitko & Kyra
Mrs. Catherine Terenchin
Ms. Cheryl Terenchin
Mrs. Mary Terenchin & Family
Kylie & Darla Teter
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Wanczenchak & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Yurick & Daughters
Hank & Anne Zerbe

ST. BASIL'S O.C.A. CHURCH

Simpson
Rev. Leo Poore
James & Mary Anne Braun
Maria K. & Jefferson H. Braun
Olga & John Buberniak
Mary Murphy
Sam & Nadine Demienovich
Helen Dorval
Judy Fleming
Olga Gallick
Helen Hrichuk
Stephen & Esther Kowalsky
Thomas & Elaine Kravetsky
Laurie, Lynn & Kimberly Kravetsky
Helen Kutch
Michael & Theresa Luczkovich
Julia Mazza
Anastasia Mikulak
Michael J. & Julia Mikulak
John & Mary Okorn
Walter & Marie Proch
Maria & John Proch
Walter & MaryAnne Proch
Christina M. & Elizabeth A. Proch
Dr. David & Darla Roat
Alexandra Roat
Jo Ann Somple

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Stroudsburg
Kathryn Pinto
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kessler
Russ & Nancy Futchko
Larissa & Jacquil Hatch
Michael & Joanne Kondratick
Peter & Helen Stavitsky
Walter & Marion Zablotsky

ST. TIKHON'S MONASTERY CHURCH

Canada
His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN
Very Rev. Daniel & Matushka Donick
Very Rev. Alexander, Matushka Elena & Alex Goltz
Very Rev. Michael Lepa

Glorify Him!

Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Reader Gregory Hatrak
Reader Gregory Sulich
Matushka Mary Borchevsky
Matushka Dorothy Sulich
Galina Abolins
Mary Andrychik
Marge Barna
Emma S. Collins
Thomas Donlick
Betty Figurs
Drs. David & Mary Ford & Emmelia
Daisy Geeza
Mr. & Mrs. William Huniak
Julia Jacewicz
Paul, Linda & Michael Kupchik
Victor Kuzemchak
Tarah Ann Kuzemchak
Aron Kuzemchak
Nicholaus Kuzemchak
Heidi JoAnn Kuzemchak
Katherine Lazrack
Mr. & Mrs. John Minarick
Mr. & Mrs. John Paluch
Martin Paluch
Ken & Margaret Paulic
Stephanie Sklarsky
Helen Sorokanich
Joseph & Olga Telowsky
Sem. James, Lisa & Jimmy Weresmedic
Paul Wozniak
Julia, William & Susan Zielinski

SS.PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH Uniondale

V. Rev. & Matushka Claude Vinyard
Lovey Klym
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Demianovich, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Bock
Lubov & Ronald Kilmer
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Demianovich
Ann & Donald Bock
Peter Hurchik
Peter & Catherine Jubinsky & Family
Peter & Linda Jubinsky & Family
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Jubinsky
Martha Dorosh
Rose M. Kennedy
Mr. & Mrs. Rob Kelleher

HOLY RESURRECTION CATHEDRAL Wilkes-Barre

Very Rev. Joseph & Matushka Gloria Martin
Marina & Elena Martin
Protodeacon Keith S. Russin
Reader David & Kathryn Kessler
David, Tatiana & Hannah Kessler
Andrew Buleza
John & Anna Dulsky
Michael & Nancy Pieck
Sandra King
Borino Family
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Humko
Mary Onufer
Olga Layton
Vladimir Glowatsky
Wendell & Marion Thomas
William Thomas
Dunsavage Family
John & Irene Zimich
Kyra E. Zoranski
John & Doris Zoranski
Sandra, Julieann & Nicholas Kapelan
Stella Terpack
Sam & Rose Ostrop
Mr. & Mrs. William Cooper
Walter & Irene Tempalski
Mr. & Mrs. Holak
Edward & Evelyn Wysocki
Marguerite & Tom Czekalski
Vera & Ray Kraynanski

Helen Umphred
Mrs. Mary Krill
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Markoff
Charles & Irene Urban
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hutz & Son
Mrs. William Kozey & Son

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wilkes-Barre

Rev. David & Matushka Sharon Shewczyk
Timothy & Nicholas Shewczyk
Father & Matushka Pawlush
Holy Trinity Altar Boys
Joseph & Nan Zula
Mary Bankos
Susan Bawn
Bob & Elaine Benczkowski
Stephen Lukachik
Barbara King
Marion & Eve Sowyrda
Peter & Theresa Pawlak
Justine Padcock
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stchur
Pearl Tutko
Mrs. Helen Zavada
Mrs. Mary Petro
Mr. & Mrs. John Bromuko
Dolores & Paul Goick
Mary Yankovich
Joseph Klemash
Michael & Lisa Tapash
Rachael & Christa
Mary Piznar
William Talpash, Jr.
Valerie Czahor
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Dutko
Mr. & Mrs. David Mills
Mary Salmay
Andrew Dennis
Mr. & Mrs. Basil Homick
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Welgo
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Sowyrda
Helen Spinicci
John Pawlak
Mr. & Mrs. Boris Mayher
Nick & Vera Goobic
Michael & Rita Goobic
Donald & Maryann Goobic
Jonah & Donna Goobic
Peter & Kathleen Goobic
J.P. & Denise Meck
Paul, Corie & Abby Meck
Homick & Canyuch Family
Mr. & Mrs. William King
Mary Skordinski
Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes
Liz & John Gurka
Mary & Stephen Krill
Marianne & Jeremy Haugh
Michael & Vera Lisko
Mrs. Anna Kondrack
Anastasi & Bernard Golubewski
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitri Shewczyk

HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Williamsport

Fr Dan & Myra Kovalak
Daria & Natalia Kovalak
Yvonne & Nathan Bohlander
Peter, Lillian & Zoe Calkins
James Chuta & Nancy Pashchuk
Helen Evrard, Corby & Morgaine Entlejan
Helene & John Fowler

John T Kovich
Phil Kundis
Lampirinos Family
Amelia, Rich & Sergius Lange
Elsie Skvir Nerle
John, Stephanie & Michael Raptis
John Sam Jr
Mr. & Mrs. Lew Shatto
Chris Sinatra & Family
Michael & Julia Stefanick
The Williams Family
Anonymous

ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wrightstown

V. Rev. Theodore Heckman
Justin, Larissa, Chryse Heckman
Peter & Julia Ren
Katherine & Euthalia Ren
Sonja (Stavisky) Lengel
Lucy & Michelle Znak
Monia & James Pitra
Irene & Sergei Archipov
Jeanette Ruano
Janet Kalenish
Sam Mervis
Vicki & Peter Kiproff
Connie, Zachary & Sergei Borchevsky
Boris & Joanne Borchevsky
Sandy, Peter & Stephanie Bohlander
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All in the Diocesan Family

St. Mary's Church Coaldale

His Eminence, Archbishop Herman visited St. Mary's Church on Sunday, September 13, the day of the parish's annual homecoming and patronal feast. A dinner and dance followed the Divine Liturgy. The parish sponsored a bus trip to the "Treasures of Nicholas and Alexandra" exhibit in Wilmington, Del. in August which was enjoyed by all. The Church School children enjoyed a hayride at Mauch Chunk State Park and the "A-Maize-ingly Wild" Cornfield Maze at the Carbon County Education Center. The trip concluded with a visit to Burger King. The women of the parish held their annual Christmas Bazaar in November, offering handmade wooden and other crafts, Christmas decorations, and delicious food items, to the delight of all who attended. A cookbook entitled *A Taste of Tradition* has been compiled and is now available from the parish. The book features many favorite recipes of parishioners and also of New York television personalities and the Penn State Tailgate group.

Parishioners Helen & George Yurchak were offered congratulations and Many Years by the parish for their fifty-first wedding anniversary on August 31. The Stanley and Anne Cornett Priesthood Scholarship was presented to seminarian Michael Hollar, son of George & Joan Hollar. Michael is a student at St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan. St. Mary's parishioners felt a sense of loss when Mr. Theodore Hawranick entered into eternal rest this past Sept. 12. He had been a past Governor of the FROC Central Pa. District (1949-50, 1953) and an active member of the parish and choir.

Baptism: Alexander Christopher, son of Larissa (Lorchak) & Christopher Verta.

Marriage: David Lorchak & Christine Levan, Sept. 5.

First Confession: Nicholas Rudenko and Samantha Vavra, Oct. 4.

Holy Trinity Church Catasauqua

Holy Trinity parish is preparing for



Archpriest Michael Lepa anoints Alexander Verta during baptism



Hayride at Mauch Chunk Park



St. Herman's parishioners at Nicholas and Alexandra exhibit

the celebration of its centennial in 1999. The parish was consecrated by St. Patriarch Tikhon and was served by St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre. In addition to various liturgical, educational and social events planned for the year, the highlight will be the hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Grand Banquet being scheduled for Oct. 17, 1999.

Baptism: Isaak Basil, son of Edward & Holly Bachert.

St. Herman's Church Gradyville

The Nicholas and Alexandra Exhibit at the Riverfront Arts Center in Wilmington, Del., was visited by the parishioners of St. Herman's Church on September 20. The parish participated in the Media Food Festival on October 4, offering a variety of ethnic Russian dishes.



Metropolitan presents icon to Fr. Michael Kovach

Christ the Savior Church Harrisburg

Associate Pastor of Christ the Savior Church, Archpriest Michael Kovach, was honored this fall on Orthodox Education Day at St. Vladimir's Seminary.

Crestwood, N.Y. Fr. Michael is the only surviving graduate from the first class of St. Vladimir's Seminary in 1943. At the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Theodosius, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America and president of the seminary presented Fr. Michael with a bronze Triptych icon to commemorate the event.

Holy Ascension Lykens

Christopher J. Coles, son of Nancy and John Coles recently received the Yamaha PASIC 1998 Scholarship. Christopher is a sophomore music education major at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, PA.



Christopher Coles of Holy Ascension Church, Lykens

SS Peter & Paul Minersville

Marriage: Kimberly Rogers & Kieth Bergan, October 24.

St. Michael's Church Old Forge

In November, the children and adults of St. Michael's joined with Holy Resurrection Cathedral for a trip to Sight and Sound in Strasburg, Pa. to see the religious presentation of "Noah." While there, they also enjoyed a traditional Amish-style dinner at the historic Strasburg Inn. St. Nicholas visited the youth and the "young at heart" on December 6, presenting them with stockings donated by the St. Michael's Russian Men's Club. Throughout the month of October, following the Sunday Divine Liturgy, the children collected money in a stocking to send for the Christmas Stockings for Russia project.

St. Michael's Church Jermyn



Archbishop Herman officiates funeral of Fr. Nicholas Fedorchak



Children greet Archbishop on parish patronal feast



Gramota presented to Willard Brown by Archbishop Herman

Baptism: Angelica, daughter of Nadine & Felix Lettini.

Marriage: Robert Sorok & Julie Wallis, November 13.

St. Herman of Alaska Church Shillington

St. Herman's Church celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Theodosius, Archbishop Herman and clergy and faithful. On October 20 the parishioners joined others from the Frackville Deanery in traveling to see the "Treasures of Nicholas and Alexandra" exhibit. The children of St. Herman's raised \$600 for the Christmas Stockings for Russia project by serving a breakfast to the parish on October 25. The parish held its annual Harvest Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 8 with over eighty people enjoying a covered dish dinner.



The newly wed Mr. & Mrs. Bergan

A molieben of thanksgiving was served on November 1 in honor of the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Henry & Anne Zerbe.

Wedding: Alexis Pahl and Ronald Hohl, Oct. 3.

Continued on the next page.

All in the Diocesan Family

Continued from page 73.

St. Herman of Alaska Church Shillington (cont'd)



Fr. John Onofrey offers prayer for Anne & Henry Zerbe



Christmas stocking project for the children of Russia

St. Mary's Assumption Church St. Clair

On the day following patronal feast day, the Dormition of the Theotokos, clergy and faithful from throughout the Frackville Deanery gathered in St. Clair to honor the Mother of God. An Akathist was served by the area clergy with the burial shroud of the Virgin Mary being taken in procession around the church. A beautiful homily was given by Fr. Srboljub Jockovich, pastor of St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church, Steelton, PA.

St. Tikhon's Monastery Church South Canaan

This past August, while most people were enjoying the warm, leisurely summer days, some dedicated faithful of our diocese were busy sprucing up the Metropolitan Leonty Dormitory summer camp area. The idea developed during summer camp, when Anna Semon, a college junior from All Saints in Olyphant, and Matushka Suzanna Diehl noticed that the camp rooms could use some refurbishing. With the blessing of our Archbishop, a group of young people, supervised by Fr. Andrew Diehl and Ron Kovalkovich, worked all week at cleaning, painting and repairing the rooms. Eleanor Barnosky from St. Gregory Palamas Mission in Stanton, NJ, provided the laborers with good meals. Helping to make the rooms "shipshape" were: Anna and Chrissy Semon, Natasha and Peter Rezanka from All Saints; Fr. Andrew and Mat. Suzanna, Jason, Alexander, and Thomas Diehl, and Brandy McDonald from St. Michael's in Wilmington, Del.; Kristina Barnosky; Natalie Hatrak from Sts. Peter & Paul's in Minersville; and Lorraine and Ronald



St. Nicholas and the children of St. Michael's, Old Forge



Fr. Michael Kovach of Harrisburg offers prayer at St. Mary's

Kovalkovich, Jr. of St. Tikhon's Monastery Church.

On Sunday, July 26, Seminarian Stephen Evanina and Jessica Slawitsky, both of St. Nicholas Church in Olyphant, were united in the mystery of Holy Matrimony. Archbishop Herman performed the ceremony, assisted by Frs. Daniel Donlick and Vladimir Fetcho at the Mon-

astery Church. Stephen is in his third year of studies towards the priesthood.

Holy Trinity Church Wilkes-Barre

Holy Trinity Church became a classroom for nearly eighty students from Wilkes-Barre Seton Catholic School's ninth grade class. Fr. David Shewczyk

gave them a tour and answered the students' questions on many topics, including icons and St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre. Thank you notes were sent to the parish from each of the students.

In October, Holy Trinity Church hosted a fall costume party for the area Orthodox children. About forty children in attendance from several parishes enjoyed the fun and fellowship. The parish supporting workers are busy every month making delicious perogies for area residents. About 55 members work monthly on the peroghi projects.

Holy Cross Church Williamsport

Holy Cross celebrated its tenth anniversary since consecration with a Divine Liturgy on Thursday, Nov. 12. Fr. Daniel Kovalak and the parish faithful were joined by many deanery clergy for the joyous celebration. The akathist hymn "Glory to God for All Things" was sung in the evening. This was followed by a potluck supper. Four more icons were installed in the parish, completing the current beautification project. The icons are of Christ the Savior, the Theotokos "Directress" icon, Elevation of the Holy Cross, and St. Catherine.



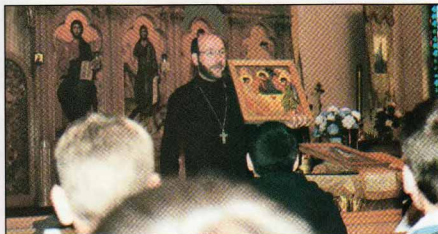
Ladies Auxilliary officers Elsie Skvir Nierle, Lenora Georges and Christine Sinatra with St. Catherine icon

Continued on the next page.

**Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!**



Vladyka Herman unites in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony Stephen Evanina and Jessica Slawitsky



Fr. Shewczyk explains St. Andrei Rublev's Trinity icon to students from Seton Catholic School.



"Busy hands" make perogies at Holy Trinity in Wilkes-Barre

All in the Diocesan Family

Continued from page 75.

OUR YOUTH

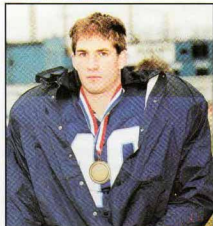
With this issue, Your Diocese Alive in Christ begins a new feature to highlight the many talented youth of our diocese. We want your input to make this feature a success. Any high school or undergraduate college student will be considered for this honor. Send your nominations to the YDAIC Editor, Our Youth Dept., PO Box 130, South Canaan, PA 18459. The Editorial staff will select one for each issue to be highlighted in this section. The deadline for this consideration will be the same as for issue publication. Include all pertinent information and a good photograph of the nominee.

When Fr. Andrew Shuga serves Divine Liturgy, chances are that standing in the Altar with him will be Paul Ervin. Paul is a senior at Berwick High School and an altar server at Holy Annunciation Church in Berwick. For most of his life, he has been a faithful server in the house of God and a good student. Paul also has another talent: he is an excellent football player. His abilities on the playing field have made him a real as-



Coach George Curry, Paul Ervin, Andy Mihaly and his son

set to the Bulldogs of Berwick, where Coach George Curry relies on the talents of another member of Holy Annunciation Church, Mr. Andrew Mihaly, who is his Assistant Coach. Besides his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Ervin, and Fr. Andrew, Coaches Curry and Mihaly have been the real influences in Paul's life, helping to shape a quiet young man into adulthood. Building up body, mind and spirit, Paul is that good and humble example of what the Orthodox Christian life is all about. We wish Paul continued success in all his endeavors, and may God grant him many years!



Paul Ervin with his medal from the district championship football game

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