

WILKES-BARRE DEANERY REPORT
Very Rev. Daniel Kovalak, Dean
Report to the 2009 Diocesan Assembly

Parish	Clergy	Adults/Children
Holy Resurrection, Alden Station	Fr. Vladimir Petorak	42/10
Holy Annunciation, Berwick	Fr. Michael Demko	79/14
St. John the Baptist, Dundaff	Fr. Dennis Swencki	28/9
St. John the Baptist, Edwardsville	Fr. Martin Browne	125/14
St. Michael, Jermyn	Fr. John Kowalczyk	165/37
St. Vladimir, Lopez	Hieromonk Michael (Thier)	31/6
St. John the Baptist, Nanticoke	Fr. Adam Sexton	62/7
St. Michael, Old Forge	Fr. John Soucek	131/25
All Saints, Olyphant	Fr. David Cowan	137/19
St. Nicholas, Olyphant	Fr. Vladimir Fetcho	56/18
St. Basil, Simpson	<i>Vacant</i>	42/4
Holy Trinity, Stroudsburg	Fr. Nicholas Solak	76/27
SS Peter & Paul, Uniondale	<i>Vacant</i>	22/8
Holy Resurrection, Wilkes-Barre	Fr. Joseph Martin	167/17
Holy Trinity, Wilkes-Barre	Fr. David Shewczyk	150/30
Holy Cross, Williamsport	Fr. Dan Kovalak	70/31
St. Tikhon's, South Canaan	<i>Stavropegial</i>	82/5

The Deanery clergy held three meetings in the past year, participated in the Diocesan Clergy Retreats, and are well-represented on the Diocesan Council. We provide mutual support for one another in responding to local pastoral needs and ministerial coverage during vacations/absences.

Due to our proximity to South Canaan, our clergy are active in the work of our Diocesan Center and the life of St Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary. Several of our clergy serve as Seminary faculty members. Many support the Seminary Food Drive and the Adopt-a-Seminarian program. Nearly all are involved on various levels at the Annual Memorial Day Monastery Pilgrimage and other monastery/seminary events and celebrations. Often, when burials are to take place at the monastery cemetery, our clergy gather to offer their prayerful support. Several attended the Summer Continuing Education Clergy Symposium at St Tikhon's and some attend conferences/training in specialized areas and accept invitations to speak in various venues.

To complement respective parish worship schedules, deanery parishes increasingly offer additional weekday services and special events for the benefit of the faithful and for outreach purposes. Akathist services, visits of wonder-working icons, concerts, movie nights, church tours, open houses and guest speakers enhance the spiritual lives of our communities, invite the public to "come and see," and expose the treasures of our Holy Faith to our neighbors. Several parishes are actively involved in providing regular liturgical and pastoral ministry to local colleges, prisons, and assisted living centers.

In addition to parish education programs, Deanery parishes participate in the Annual St Tikhon's Lecture Series and recently have worked to coordinate guest speakers (like Fr Peter Gillquist) to offer lectures in local parishes. Regional parishes increasingly strive to coordinate

educational opportunities (e.g. the Vacation Church School for the Wilkes-Barre area) and in other areas (e.g. the renewal of the Wyoming Valley Orthodox Choir). At the western end of the Deanery, Holy Cross, Williamsport hosts an annual lecture series and other events which deanery clergy and faithful attend. It is hoped to expand such efforts in the future.

Deanery parishes are active in supporting mission and ministries beyond their local parishes into their respective communities and the world! We work to provide ongoing prayerful support to OCMC missionary to Romania, Christina Semon, from All Saints Church, Olyphant. Fr Nicholas Solak led another home-building team in July to St Innocent's Orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico. Most parishes regularly support the ambitious work of IOCC, including funding for participants in the ongoing restoration work on the Gulf Coast since Hurricane Katrina. Most of our parishes support local humanitarian agencies and initiatives like soup kitchens, homeless shelters, veteran centers, and interfaith ministries, as well as domestic and foreign monasteries, seminaries, "sister churches" and orphanages.

During the past Lent, the Sunday of Orthodoxy service was hosted by Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre and enhanced by the presence and homily of Bishop Thomas of the Antiochian Archdiocese. "Mission Vespers" were held each Lenten Sunday in various parishes with collections taken for the deanery (our only source of income). We hope to publish a booklet of Lenten meditations written by deanery clergy for distribution during the coming Great Lent. The Holy Wednesday Unction service was held at St Michael, Jermyn.

We rejoiced in centennial celebrations of Holy Annunciation, Berwick (Oct 24) and St Michael, Jermyn (Nov 7). St John, Edwardsville, and St John, Nanticoke, are now preparing for centennial celebrations. We also rejoice with deanery clergy and faithful who have received synodal awards and gramotas the past year (as listed in diocesan publications).

Our clergy brotherhood offers thanks and appreciation to former Dean, Fr Vladimir Fetcho, for his many years of leadership and guidance. In granting his request to be released from his duties as Dean, Bishop Tikhon, in his letter of May 6, commended Fr Vladimir for his great dedication and service to the Deanery. On July 22, Fr Dan Kovalak, Vice-Dean, was appointed Acting Dean until the convening of a meeting for a regular election of Deanery officers.

On October 8, Bishop Tikhon presided at the Deanery Meeting at Holy Resurrection, Wilkes-Barre. Elected by the parish clergy were: Fr Dan Kovalak, Dean; Fr David Shewczyk, Assistant Dean; Fr Nicholas Solak, Secretary; Fr David Cowan, Treasurer.

On November 12, deanery parish clergy met in Pittston to begin planning for the future, share common concerns, and prepare for the Diocesan Assembly. A number of issues were identified that require ongoing discussion, mutual support and guidance, and appropriate programming to address. Subsequent meetings will specially focus on these issues and their practical applications in the life of our diocese, deanery and respective parishes.

With the blessing of Bishop Tikhon, our deanery is planning the following:

- 1) The Deanery will sponsor a bus to the Annual March for Life in Washington, DC on Friday, January 22, 2010. For further information/reservations, contact coordinator, Fr Adam Sexton (570-735-2263). We specially encourage college students and youth to participate, joining Bishop Tikhon, deanery clergy and faithful.

2) Lenten Mission Vespers, 2010. We encourage more deanery faithful to participate in these wonderful opportunities to collectively share our pilgrimage to Pascha in worship and fellowship.

3) A Deanery Administrative Conference, to include parish clergy, Parish Council presidents and other parish representatives is slated for Saturday, April 17 at St Michael's Church in Jermyn. Details will be announced before Lent.

The Deanery also includes a number of retired and "attached" clergy whose participation and involvement in, and unique contributions to, our corporate life are greatly valued and appreciated. Though our meetings will tend to focus primarily on issues faced by parish clergy, we enjoy the fellowship of retired and attached clergy at clergy retreats, parish celebrations and deanery events and hope to expand these opportunities in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Fr Dan Kovalak, Dean