

**OFFICE OF CHURCH SCHOOL EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PA**

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Over seventy women representing the Diocese of Eastern PA, Diocese of New York/ New Jersey, Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., ROCOR, and the Greek Archdiocese attended the Annual Women's Retreat held at St. Tikhon's Seminary sponsored by the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern PA.

The Retreat opened with prayers lead by Archimandrite Sergius, Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery. Fr. Sergius was the opening speaker for the retreat. He spoke on the topics of Depression, Confession, and Prayer and provided each of the women copies of the morning and evening prayers, as well as the Akathist "Glory to God for All Things." He spoke of the importance of prayer and finding time in your daily life, while at the same time emphasizing the significance of Being, Rather than Doing. He also spoke also of the importance of Confession. He also suggested, if at all possible, everyone during their lifetime should make a Life Confession. This is your story and it provides an avenue to connect to God. Time was set aside for questions and answers at the end of the session.

The morning session closed with greetings by His Grace, Bishop Mark.

During the lunch break, the women enjoyed some fellowship, time to walk around the Monastery grounds, visit the church, and time in the bookstore.

The speaker for the afternoon session was Daria Virvan, (CRNP-PMH, BC) a Clinical Specialist in Adult Psych/Mental Health, in private practice who works in the mental health community of the greater Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD metropolitan areas. Her areas of focus for her talk included: Depression, Anxiety, Stress Management, and Suicide Prevention. She provided the women with definitions, signs and symptoms of many Mental Health issues. She also spoke about the constructive use of medications in the treatment of some of these issues. She provided the women with various creative strategies to handle anxiety and for managing depression. The workshop provided the attendees an opportunity to become familiar with the *Depression Scale*, *Social Interaction Anxiety Scale*, and the *Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale*. There was a question and answer session immediately following the talk.

The 2015 Women's Retreat will be held on Saturday, August 22. As a result of the surveys, Fr. Sergius will once again open the morning session.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BOOTH: Will be held during the Memorial Day Pilgrimage on Monday, May 25, 2015.

If anyone has ideas or suggestions for future Department activities, please contact me at: mariapr22@hotmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Proch