

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF  
THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The 28th Annual Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania of the Orthodox Church in America was convened on Saturday, June 22, 1991 at St. Tikhon's Seminary/Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN, Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, concelebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and Molieben with clergy representing the three deaneries.

Following the Divine Liturgy, the Assembly gathered in the Seminary Dining Hall for a continental breakfast. Clergy, delegates and observers then proceeded to the Seminary Auditorium, the site of the Assembly sessions, for registration.

ASSEMBLY SESSION

The session was begun with prayer and the blessing of Bishop HERMAN at 11:30 a.m. His Grace welcomed the delegates and declared the 28th Assembly to be open. The agenda was reviewed and no changes were made.

Credentials committee:

Fr. John Onofrey reported the following:

Hierarch	1
Clergy	34
Laity	33
Alternates	5
Diocesan Council	3
Observers	7

for a total of 83 present at the Assembly.

Election of Assembly Officers:

Fr. John Kowalczyk submitted the following clergy and laity for Assembly Officers:

Clergy Vice-Chairman --	Fr. John Udics
Lay Vice-Chairman --	Mr. Walter Moschowsky
Clergy Secretary --	Fr. David Shewczyk
Lay Secretary --	Mrs. Marie Proch

There being no further nominations on the floor, Fr. David Lisko moved to close nominations for Clergy Vice-Chairman, seconded by Fr. Michael Hatrak. Motion Carried.

Fr. Vladimir Petorak moved to close nominations for Lay Vice-Chairman, seconded by Mary Diffendorfur. Motion carried.

Fr. John Mason moved to close nominations for Clergy



Secretary, seconded by Fr. Claude Vinyard. Motion carried.

John Zoranski moved to close nominations for Lay Secretary seconded by John Kovich. Motion carried.

#### MINUTES OF THE 1990 ASSEMBLY.

The minutes of the 1990 Assembly were part of the packet of materials sent to delegates prior to the Assembly. Fr. Joseph Martin moved to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Steve Kaminsky. Motion carried.

#### DIOCESAN BISHOP'S REPORT

Before giving his report, Bishop HERMAN intoned "Memory Eternal" for Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky and Fr. Adam Krell who fell asleep in the Lord during the past year.

His Grace joyously welcomed all gathered for the Assembly and reminded the delegates of the shared responsibility of doing the Lord's work. Pastors are ordained and parish council members are confirmed by the bishop in all parishes. Receiving their appointment and delegation of authority from the diocesan bishop, the pastors and parish council members assume their duties and responsibilities under his authority and become co-workers. On the diocesan level, the bishop shares his work with many others in order to promote more effectively the Mission of the Church of building up the Body of Christ. No one person can be all-knowing and informed in all facets involving the administration of the diocese and therefore we need shared responsibility.

The priestly ministry is a labor of love and sacrifice. Teaching, preaching, administering sacraments, establishing missions, caring for the needs of our parishes, diocese and our territorial church must be a part of our daily task. Bishop HERMAN encouraged all to continue to nourish the good seed that has been planted. He reminded delegates that they will not always see immediate results of their labors and that they should not be discouraged because of this.

As of January 1, 1991, there are 5,560 members of the Diocese, a loss of 145 members from the previous year. Our membership will probably drop again this year. Many of our parishes consist of older people and few children. The continuous fall in membership is of great concern to the Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. Bishop HERMAN called for a demographic profile of all parishes to be presented at the 1992 Diocesan Assembly for review and action. Forms will be sent to every parish. The cooperation of all parishes is needed in this project and it is the responsibility of every parish to be sure that the form is completed properly.

Bishop HERMAN reported that Fr. Alexander Fecanin has been appointed Rector of St. Michael's, Old Forge. Fr. Emilian Hutnyan has been received into the Diocese and is temporarily attached to St. Tikhon's Monastery while



recuperating from a successful kidney transplant. Fr. Daniel Degyansky has been assigned Acting Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Pottstown. St. Basil's Church, Simpson is being serviced by Monastery Clergy. St. John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville is being serviced by clergy from the Wilkes-Barre Deanery.

The Bishop also noted the following Parish Anniversaries: 75th Anniversary of St. Michael Church, Wilmington (11/4/90); St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem (4/28/91); St. Michael Church, Old Forge - 100th Anniversary (9/15/91); St. Michael Church, Mount Carmel - blessing of new icons (9/29/91).

The new Metropolitan Leonty Dormitory of St. Tikhon's Seminary will be dedicated on Sunday, August 18, 1991. Bishop HERMAN called for the support of the Diocesan Faithful for this occasion.

The recent Memorial Day Pilgrimage was a success and His Grace extended heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Monastery Brotherhood. He also recognized the Church School children who marched in procession with their banners and the Athonite Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos, "She Who is Quick to Hear."

His Grace expressed gratitude to all department members for their work during the last year. He noted the work of Matushka Isabel Anderson for her good work in the Department of Education. She has many good ideas as demonstrated in the Youth Work N Worship Week. Only 18 young people participated in the program but, they accomplished a great deal in a short time. The youth were given certificates for their participation in the program. Bishop HERMAN suggested that this program could be used on deanery levels. Again, the support of clergy and faithful is necessary to make the program a success.

Bishop HERMAN announced that the 10th All-American Council will be held in July 1992 in Miami, Florida. He urged all to begin preparations now for the priest and delegate from every parish to attend. All priests are asked to attend and all parishes must be represented.

Bishop HERMAN said that Martin Paluch was doing a good job with the Youth Department even in light of many disappointments due to the lack of support. More support comes from neighboring dioceses than from our own. His Grace announced that twenty-five young people from Russia will be visiting the diocese in July. They will be housed at the Seminary and attend Divine Liturgy in Jermyn.

His Grace announced that evening courses will be conducted this Fall at St. Tikhon's for training Choir Directors and Church School Teachers. Continuing education for diocesan clergy is also being planned so that they may be better able to serve the faithful.

The date for the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in America will be from September 1993 until September 1994. The schedule of events will be made available in the near future and will be distributed to all parishes. A local



Bicentennial Committee will be appointed.

His Grace noted that it has been several years since a Diocesan Assembly has considered clergy remuneration. A letter is sent by the Bishop every year to all parishes to consider clergy remuneration. Serious attention is needed to support pastors. A proposal will be made during the Assembly and it is hoped that the proposal will be favorably received.

A budget increase of \$5.00 per member is proposed in this year's budget. It has been some time since there has been a raise in the diocesan assessment. Bishop Herman reported that our diocese has the lowest diocesan assessment and the lowest budget even though the diocese is the third largest. The vision for 1992 is to accomplish even more than in the past. More needs to be done for religious education for youth, stewardship and senior citizens as well as continuing education for clergy and perhaps a small scholarship for seminary students.

The United Appeal was solicited by direct mail last year. More money was received in this manner than through the separate appeals of the past. Bishop HERMAN expressed his heartfelt thanks to clergy and laity for their contributions. However, less than 25% of diocesan membership responded to the United Appeal. It was hoped that the United Appeal would do away with the need to raise the assessment. But, it is evident that it is only through the individual assessment that everyone will carry their fair share in supporting the diocesan budget.

Bishop HERMAN expressed his gratitude to Fr. John Kowalczyk, Fr. Daniel Donlick and to all for sharing in the work to build up the Body of Christ. He asked all to pray to God to grant us the wisdom and understanding that we may learn His Holy Will and grant us all those things needful for the building up of our diocese and His Holy Orthodox Church.

#### REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

His Grace welcomed Fr. Rodion Kondratick, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, to the Assembly. Fr. Rodion then gave the following report.

Fr. Rodion offered greetings on behalf of His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS to Bishop HERMAN, the clergy and laity of the Diocese. His Beatitude would have liked to attend the Assembly but, he was attending to his duties in the Diocese of the Midwest as Temporary Administrator. Fr. Rodion noted that with the full consensus of the Holy Synod, the Metropolitan will attend all Diocesan Assemblies. Fr. Rodion will attend when it is not possible for His Beatitude to attend. There are 14 Diocesan Assemblies to be held including Assemblies in Australia, Mexico and South America. Fr. Rodion said that he would like to visit all of the deaneries within the Orthodox Church in America but, this would be a difficult schedule of follow.



Fr. Rodion reported that a new course has been charted and we are trying to prioritize in order to solve problems. The highest priority is our spiritual life and well-being. This is being discussed at great length and the subject will be discussed at one complete session of the All-American Council next year.

Another area of concern is the care of clergy, ie., pastoral needs and the availability of support services for their personal lives and ministry.

The liturgical life of parishes and institutions is being studied. More and more parishes are ceasing to have Saturday evening services and even major Feast Day liturgies are not being served. The National Church is aware of this disintegration and clergy and parishes are encouraged to have these services.

In the area of clergy retirement, it was noted that between the years 1994-1997 we will lose approximately 62 from the ranks of the clergy. Clergy are encouraged to maintain their pastoral work beyond retirement age if health permits. Fr. Rodion asked all to encourage others to seek vocations for pastors and church school teachers. Less than 50% of parishes used the materials on "Vocations" provided by the National Church last year and Fr. Rodion asked all to please use the materials. He noted a decline in enrollment in all Seminaries and again asked the Assembly members to encourage young men to attend the Seminary.

Communication lines are continually being improved. Fr. Basil Summer, Director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, has visited 90 Communities in the past year-and-a-half. The financial problems have been resolved and the church is on stable ground. Financial issues are being addressed by the Finance Committee. All departments are back up and operating with an episcopal moderator at the head of each department. The OCA Newspaper is taking on a new form. The search committee for a new editor has received 16 applications. His Beatitude has chosen Fr. John Matusiak for the position.

The All-American Council will be held in Miami, Florida July 26-31, 1992. It is hoped that all parishes will be represented. Every clergy must be in attendance as this Council will change the focus of the Church for the next 6-10 years.

The Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in America will take place between September 1993 and September 1994. Patriarch ALEXIS II of the Russian Orthodox Church has been invited and will attend. He will visit Alaska, California, Illinois, Michigan, Washington, D. C., New York and Pennsylvania.

Representatives of the OCA have been doing much traveling recently because of the global changes in the state of Orthodoxy in the world of today.

Patriarch IGNATIUS IV of Antioch will be in the country in July. His Beatitude will meet with him.



The Patriarchate of Moscow is concerned over the intrusion of Roman Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical and Uniate Churches as well as the uncanonical activities of the Synodal Church. This is the concern of every Orthodox Church. Fr. Rodion also noted concerns over the state of the Church in the Diaspora and the desecration of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem and Turkey. The state of affairs of SCOBA is being discussed. The Greek Archdiocese is suspending activities within the National Council of Churches and the Anglican Dialogue.

Concerning the state of the OCA, Fr. Rodion reported that His Beatitude is administrating the vacant dioceses. Many deaneries are showing much activity. He reminded the delegates that everything begins with each one of us. It takes the priests and the councils to motivate parishioners. Again, it all starts with us. We need to have decent salaries for priests, bishops and lay workers. On June 10, 1991, Patriarch ALEXIS II praised the activity of the Orthodox Church in America and our departments. The Russian Orthodox Church translates and uses our materials but, we do not use our own materials.

Fr. Rodion exhorted the delegates to be motivated and come alive again. Attitude has a lot to do with it.

Fr. Rodion thanked Bishop HERMAN for his work on the national level. His Grace is one of the best known of all of our OCA bishops and he is especially known for his great dedication.

Fr. Rodion closed by saying that we have a structure in place and it is up to us to direct it. He said, "You are loved, respected and encouraged in your work. It takes you to respond and we can get more things done in the life of our church."

Fr. Rodion expressed greetings and congratulations on behalf of His Beatitude to Bishop HERMAN on the occasion of His Grace's 10th Anniversary of Installation as Bishop of the Diocese.

#### SECOND SESSION - 2:00 p.m.

Fr. John Onofrey made the following credentials report for the afternoon session:

Hierarchy	1
Clergy	34
Laity	33
Alternate	5
Diocesan Council	3
Observers	7

Fr. John Maxwell moved to accept the report of the Diocesan Council Secretary contained in the packet, seconded by John Kovich. Motion carried.

Joseph Krenitsky moved to accept the report of the Diocesan Treasurer, seconded by Fr. David Lisko. Motion carried.

Fr. Paul Borick and Gene Haverlak audited the books



and found all to be in order. Fr. John Mason moved to accept the Auditor's Report, seconded by Harrison Hubiak. Motion carried.

#### PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1992

Fr. Eugene Vansuch moved that the proposed budget be approved by the Assembly, seconded by Fr. John Maxwell. After discussion and questions, the budget was passed by the Assembly.

#### REPORTS

The Diocesan Deanery, Department and Metropolitan Council reports were all included in the packet sent to all delegates prior to the Assembly.

Concerning the Department of Missions, Bishop HERMAN announced that Holy Cross Church, Williamsport has petitioned the Diocese for full parish status and that the funds for that parish be sent instead to the Mission in Wrightstown, Pennsylvania. His Grace commended the work of the faithful of Holy Cross and the Assembly applauded their efforts as well.

Concerning the Department of Youth, it was suggested that the materials from the Youth Work N Worship Week at St. Tikhon's be packaged and sent to the parishes for use.

Fr. David Lisko moved to accept all reports as presented seconded by Fr. Neal Carrigan. Motion carried.

#### CLERGY COMPENSATION

Fr. John Onofrey reported that a review was carried out concerning clergy compensation. The review committee also included Fr. Joseph Martin and Fr. Stephen Karaffa. It was noted that the last compensation review was done in 1981. It was suggested that a good attitude be developed between the pastor and the church council so that a basis for adequate compensation could be developed.

Figures for this review were derived after studying compensation by various churches including the Carpatho-Russian, Greek, Orthodox Evangelical Church and the Roman Catholic Churches. Local economic conditions were also considered. It was suggested by the committee that this compensation package be reviewed in 3 years.

Fr. Joseph Martin moved the proposal, seconded by Steve Kaminsky. After discussion, it was clarified that all parishes are encouraged to consider implementation of this Clergy Compensation Schedule at their next Annual Meeting. This schedule will be used upon the appointment of a new rector to a parish. Motion carried.

There were no resolutions proposed for consideration by this Assembly.

#### ELECTION OF DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEMBERS

The following people were nominated by Fr. Vladimir Fetcho of the nominating committee for election to the



Diocesan Council:

Clergy: Fathers Eugene Vansuch, Michael Matrak, Stephen Karaffa and John Mason.

Laity: John Zoransky, Marie Proch, Dr. Paul Pianovich and Paula Lahutsky.

Auditors: Fr. Paul Borick, Gene Haverlak and a third to be nominated from the floor.

Paula Lahutsky nominated Mary Diffendorfur.

Fr. David Lisko moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for those nominated, seconded by Fr. Neal Carrigan. Motion carried.

#### OTHER MATTERS

Fr. Daniel Kovalak asked about the proposed Clergy Conference. The dates will be set shortly.

The budget for the Diocesan magazine was questioned by Walter Moschowsky on behalf of the parish council of All Saints Church, Olyphant. In answer, it was reported that the staff is doing everything possible to keep costs down and still put out a magazine of the same quality.

Mr. Moschowsky also asked if the parishes were making the monthly assessments in a timely fashion. It was reported that they indeed were.

Fr. John Onofrey asked that materials to be discussed at the All-American Council be sent to parishes for study so that delegates are properly prepared to vote at the Council. Fr. Rodion Kondratich answered that every issue to be discussed is treated in some manner in the Study Papers. After receiving the Study Papers we should come together as the parish community, the deanery community and the diocesan community to discuss the issues.

Other questions were directed to Fr. Kondratich in the time remaining. He stated that social and economic resolutions for the All-American Council will be presented 60 days in advance and voted on in block.

The Financial Task Force is now meeting to present three forms of giving including the head tax, percentage giving and a combination of both. Consideration is being given to all material gained from the financial census. Only 70% of the parishes responded to the census. The budget is based upon the census as of December 31, 1991.

The Assembly was closed with Congratulations and "Many Years" offered to our spiritual father Bishop HERMAN on his 10th Anniversary of Installation as Bishop of the Diocese. Eis Polla Eti Despota.

Fr. John Mason moved to adjourn, seconded by Fr. Michael Thier.

The Assembly closed with prayer and the blessing of the Bishop.



Respectfully Submitted,

*Priest David Shewczyk*

Priest David Shewczyk

*Mrs. Marie Proch*

Mrs. Marie Proch

Approved by

*+ Bishop Herman*

His Grace, Bishop HERMAN