



**St. Louis, Missouri**  
**July 23-27, 2018**

## **DEPARTMENTS REPORTS**

*Bring this handbook to the AAC and place it in the notebook provided at registration*

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This report has been prepared to introduce the work of the Boards, Departments, and Institutions of The Orthodox Church in America for the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council to be held in St. Louis, MO from July 23 through July 27, 2018.

Contained in this report is a review of their work from the last All American Council. This report also contains a review of the work of the Metropolitan Council. A full financial report of the Stavropegial Institutions of the Orthodox Church in America can be found in the Financial Report.

Many of the Departments and Institutions will also have display booths containing additional information. They will also be presenting a short oral report at the Council in which further questions may be asked.

This report is divided into three sections: Boards, Commission and Departments; Institutions; and then Metropolitan Council. Please thoroughly read each report in preparation for the Council.

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# 1. Boards, Commissions and Departments

## A. Board of Theological Education

### Mandate

Under the direction of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, the Board of Theological Education establishes, maintains, and oversees the general standards and curriculum for the education and formation of clergy in the Orthodox Church in America's three seminaries.

The Diaconal Vocations Program (DVP) is a program of theological study providing academic preparation for men who may be called to ordination to the Holy Diaconate but unable to attend a seminary. It is also designed to address specific academic and pastoral issues of non-Orthodox clergy — who may have already earned a theological degree such as a M.Div. — who are seeking entry into the Orthodox Church and may eventually be called to Holy Orders.

The Board of Theological Education attends to the general standards and curriculum for the Church's Late Vocations Programs, evaluates those who complete such programs, and offers recommendations on the ordination of individuals completing such programs. The theme of this All-American Council is at the heart of the work of the Board of Theological Education and its Diaconal Vocations Program. The members of the Board of Theological Education are always mindful that the Board's oversight of theological education and the ordination process, so to speak, is in service of the salvific mission of the Church in the world. The Board is continually and introspectively considering how best to serve the needs of the Church today while upholding the high standards of the Orthodox Church in America.

### Membership

Metropolitan Tikhon, *Chairperson*; Archbishop Michael, *Diocese of New York and New Jersey*; Archbishop Irénée, *Archdiocese of Canada*; Fr. John Jillions, *Chancellor*; Fr. Kirill Sokolov, *Director of Diaconal and Late Vocations Programs, Secretary of the Board of Theological Education*; Fr. John Dunlop, *Dean, St. Herman's Seminary*; Fr. Stephen Voytovich, *Dean, St. Tikhon's Seminary*; Fr. Chad Hatfield, *President, St. Vladimir's Seminary*

Full contact information for the Board and the DVP can be found at <http://www.oca.org/dvp>.

### Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council

Archpriest Kirill Sokolov (appointed 2010) continues to serve as Director of Diaconal and Late Vocations and as a resource to the Board of Theological Education.

At any given moment, there are approximately thirty candidates actively engaged in study in the Diaconal Vocations Program. Additionally, 5-10 students are enrolled in

diaconal formation programs of dioceses at any given time. The Board works to coordinate the efforts of local diaconal training programs and to facilitate clear communication between bishops, candidates, parish clergy, program directors, and the Holy Synod.

Since 2007, Diaconal Liturgical Practicums have been a required component of the DVP. A longer annual practicum is held at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and shorter programs are held in various dioceses of the Church as requested.

Since the last All-American Council, the course materials of the "basic track" of the Diaconal Vocations Program have been revised and have been made available at the online educational portal of the Orthodox Church in America.

The Board of Theological Education continues to support His Beatitude and the Holy Synod of Bishops in reviewing procedures and practices related to training and ordination of clergy. The Board now more regularly meets with its full membership, which includes the heads of the Church's three seminaries. Reflection and oversight around issues facing our seminaries and theological education more generally is an ongoing task of the Board.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

The Board is always seeking to find a balance in its Diaconal Vocations Program between academic preparation, spiritual preparation, and practical training for the diaconal ministry. The bonds between diocesan/regional programs and the work of the church-wide Diaconal Vocations Program continue to be strengthened and work should continue in this area. Our deacons, regardless of which program they graduate from, reflect the mobility of the workforce in general. It is not uncommon for a diaconal candidate to begin a program in one diocese, finish in another, and serve out the majority of his diaconate in a third. To this end, our communication and collaboration must be excellent.

Calls for pathways to priestly ordination other than the traditional residential seminary program must be considered by the Board and the Church at large. As hybrid and online education becomes more accepted in society and in theological preparation generally, what is the response of the Church? Is the profile of the "average" future priest changing as well? The Board seeks to thoughtfully study these questions and the needs of the Church in a patient and faithful way and is mindful of the benefits of a sustained residential program of theological preparation.

In 2017, at His Beatitude's initiative, the Board began to work towards more regular academic exchange programs with the Church of Russia. In June of 2018, a first exchange from the Orthodox Church in America to the Church of Russia will take place. God willing, a return visit will take place in 2019. Future plans include seminarian and professor exchanges. The Board is looking forward to ways to work closely with our seminaries to extend such to other Local Orthodox Churches.

### **Conclusion**

The members of the Board of Theological Education are grateful for the efforts of dozens of priests throughout the Orthodox Church in America who serve as mentors in its program. We thank the faithful Orthodox Christians who support men as they seek

God's will to serve as deacons and priests in our Church and to bring the good news of the One who deigned to come and dwell with us for the life of the world and its salvation.

## **B. Department of Christian Education**

### **Mandate**

The Department of Christian Education is mandated to support teachers, clergy, families and others engaged in Christian Education and faith formation at every level. Serving with the blessing and guidance of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and the Holy Synod of Bishops, and with the encouraging oversight of the episcopal liaison, His Eminence Archbishop Benjamin, the Department strives to fulfill this mandate. Services provided by the Department include written materials, downloadable teaching units, teacher training, individual consultations, retreats and workshops.

### **Membership**

Archbishop Benjamin, *Episcopal Liaison*, Matushka Valerie Zahirsky, *chair*; Mrs. Veronica Bilas; Matushka Myra Kovalak; Miss Maria Proch; Matushka Alexandra Safchuk; Mrs. Jewelann Stefanar; Matushka Christine Zebrun; Webmaster John Pusey (part-time.)

### **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

When we say that Jesus Christ came to be among us and to give Himself “for the life of the world” we should remember that this giving up was not easy or peaceful. Christ had to struggle against evil and foolishness in the world. He had to stand, always in humility and silence, against the false accusations of those who felt threatened by what He was doing. He had to suffer and know that those who truly loved Him, most of all the Theotokos, suffered as they witnessed His undeserved suffering.

But the end of all this was the Resurrection, and the fulfillment of the life of the world—a life that Christians came to understand as leading to eternal joy with Him in His Father’s house.

So as we meet to discuss problems, difficulties and thorny issues, we should remember not to be disheartened, not to let ourselves believe that tough issues are the most important part of our life as a Church. We also meet in the Divine Liturgy, and have the privilege of taking, together, that liturgical “journey to the Kingdom” and receiving the Eucharist.

That is the important part of our life together at the Council. That is the life that Christ came to give to us, and to the world. How wonderful if this meeting can show us to be people who realize what a gift they have been given, and are striving to be worthy of it.

## Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council

*Study Questions:* Father Thomas Hopko requested the Department to provide discussion/study questions for the four volumes of The Orthodox Faith, his comprehensive study of all aspects of Orthodoxy for students and seekers, a revision of and addition to his earlier series. Department members created 360 questions (with answers in separate documents) and included several points for discussion and reflection.

*Seasonal Activities for Download:* The Department provides activities, crafts and Bible studies for students of various ages. Sometimes these focus on a saint or an aspect of worship. For example, a set of activities for spring focused on Saint Pachomius, whose feast day is May 9<sup>th</sup>. The most recently-posted set, activities for Holy Week through Bright Week, included reflection on the “dry bones” reading from Ezekiel.

“The Rest of the Story” is a five-day unit of study, crafts and activities produced by a parishioner in Kentucky. Intended for younger children, it encourages Christian behavior, giving saints as examples. It was edited and expanded by Department members and offered for download on the Department site. This unit joins several others on the Department site—plays, stories and various activities.

“Saints and The Animals That Served Them” is the title of the fourth in the Department series of downloadable Activity Books. Like the previous books, it has a variety of activities enabling students to study twelve saints. The life story, maps, an icon-like picture to color, activities, journaling questions, quotes, references and glossary words are provided for each of the twelve saints, as well as photographs when there are some that relate to the saint. In this book, each saint had some kind of companionship with animals, helping students understand that when we speak of “the life of the world” we mean all of God’s creation, including the animals.

Taking a close look at these saints’ lives also helps students see that when a person lives a holy life, it is possible to have a “restored” relationship with animals, like that in the Garden of Eden before the fall of mankind.

“Saints Who Were Physicians and Healers” is the fifth in the Department’s series of Activity Books. The lives of the twelve saints (plus a few extra about whom there is less information) have the common theme of their offering physical as well as spiritual healing and miracles. This is perhaps a particularly apt group of saints for our students to get to know, living as they do in a culture which so highly prizes physical health, prowess and attractiveness. These saints acknowledged the importance of physical well-being by learning how to contribute to it, and in them God also showed His care for the physical life by endowing them with healing abilities. This helps students understand that God is concerned for all aspects of our life. Every kind of health—spiritual, mental and also physical—is given to us by God for the life of the world.

This book has some special insights for students. First, it contains the story of the women who were the original unmercenaries--not Cosmas and Damian but the sisters Philonella and Zenaida. Again, this is a significant cultural reference for young people growing up in a society in which women are looking for increased respect for their abilities and accomplishments. The acknowledgment of these women as the first healing unmercenaries is a good indication that the Church is ready to give that respect. It may also be a new discovery for readers that there are three pairs of saints named Cosmas and Damian, from different parts of the world. Their stories are all included in the book.

Because this book contains more saints than the previous ones, it came out to 180 pages. There may be users who don't wish to download so many pages at once; they may want only the saints' lives, or just the activities, or only certain saints, for example. So sections of the book will be offered for individual download. Our webmaster is in the process of determining precisely how this will be done, and what sections of the book will be offered.

"Luminaries" is the sixth book in the Activity Book series. Now being written and planned to be ready for the 19<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, this book will have the same format as the previous books in the series. However it is somewhat different from the earlier ones in that it covers more contemporary people who were not saints in all cases, but who are leaders and lights of the Church. Among those included in this book are Mother Alexandra, Metropolitan Leonty, Mrs. Sophie Koulomzin and Father John Meyendorff. Another difference from previous books in the series will be that this book will have photographs rather than drawings as the illustrations of each saint. This will emphasize that saints are not only people from long-ago times and, but can also be contemporaneous (or nearly so) with our students and faced situations that are still familiar to them.

*Retreats and Consultations:* Department members have consulted with teachers in several parishes to help with issues in their church schools, to help them set up programs, to recommend curricular and supplemental materials, and to demonstrate teaching methods and materials.

A retreat for women entitled "Sisters on the Journey" has been presented by the Department chair in two parishes, including one in the Antiochian Archdiocese, and at the annual retreat for women held at St. Tikhon's Seminary. The retreat focuses on female saints and other women in the history of the Church as examples for us today.

Another retreat entitled "Orthodox Surprises" offers an Orthodox perspective on historical events. Two examples: Thomas Jefferson's "rewriting" of the Bible compared to the Orthodox view that the Bible is not "inerrant" but that its words should not be tampered with, and the witness of the Orthodox during the Boxer Rebellion uprising in China.

*Inter-Orthodox Cooperation:* The Department's members attend meetings of the Orthodox Christian Education Commission and work with its other members on the development of curriculum and new programs.

In addition, Department members have participated in the Orthodox Institutes held at Antiochian Village, both as registrants and instructors. These are co-sponsored by the Orthodox Church in America, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, and the Antiochian Archdiocese.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

*Production of additional Activity Books for download:* The books have gotten a great deal of positive response; the Department was gratified to learn that they are being used in parishes overseas, and that home schoolers are finding them helpful as curriculum items because they offer ways of meeting various learning styles as well as giving basic information about the Church in appealing and effective ways.

*Further presentations of retreats:* These programs have been very well received, and give the presenter a chance to include elements of Christian education while talking about saints and prominent women. For example, liturgical hymns can be analyzed and sung together as the saints are discussed. The specific details of icons, as they relate to a particular saint, can also be noted and reflected on. Retreats also attract some older church school students to attend, thereby deepening their knowledge of the Church.

*Continuing seasonal activity units for download:* Teachers have told us they appreciate having these supplemental materials to use as reinforcements of the study of a liturgical season, worship practice, or saint in their classes.

*Continuing consultations with teachers and other educators:* The Department is glad to offer suggestions and guidance to church schools. In addition, the Department serves as a clearing house for materials created by teachers in parishes, and is glad to offer them on the Department site to other teachers.

*Resource list:* The Department is compiling and will offer on the Department site and to our database a list of resources, including both items on the Department site and other materials that will be of use to teachers. This will include curricular materials, sources for various kinds of educational items, and books that have been sent to the Department for review.

### **How to Address the Theme in the Future:**

The Department of Christian Education's series of Activity Books, which look at the lives of saints through several means, have gotten a broad and very warm reception. Therefore the Department plans, as noted above, to continue producing them. Saints, like icons, are the visible proof that human beings can be signs of the new life that



Christ gave us. The saints did miracles, they saved lives, and they showed others what God is like by the holiness of their own lives. This is one of the most significant ways in which our Department will address the theme in the years to come.

Another way our Department will address the theme is by attempting to provide answers to deep questions that young people often ask. If our children and youth are to believe that Christ loves them enough to give Himself for the life of the world—the world in which they live—they must be able to get meaningful answers to questions about life and death, the existence of evil, and other such things that occupy them. In the series of questions and answers the Department has prepared for Father Hopko's book series The Orthodox Faith there are several points for reflection that encourage people to think about and discuss aspects of such questions. This same kind of reflection and discussion is encouraged in the study units the Department produces for Church seasons.

A third way of addressing the theme will be to continue producing materials that will help students to a deeper and more personal understanding of the Divine Liturgy and the Eucharist. As our students grow in this understanding, they will also grow in their appreciation of Christ's gift of Himself for the life of the world.

The retreats conducted by members of the Department are a means of sharing with adults, as well as students, some of these truths about the life of the world that Our Lord offers us.

### **Conclusion:**

The Department of Christian Education takes a holistic approach to education. The breadth of written materials the Department produces, in addition to its programs, retreats and conferences, all have the goal of bringing the members of the Church closer to Christ. Father Alexander Schmemmann was a strong advocate of education for the laity in our Church, and our Department takes that as a reason to provide educational materials of all kinds.

At the same time, the Department wants to support everyone who is engaged in Christian Education, and this is the reason for personal consultations as well as programs, such as conferences and retreats, for groups.

In all the Department's work the central effort is to help people to an awareness that they really are God's "chosen people" with a privilege and responsibility to live as Christ called us to when He came for the life of the world.

## **C. Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid**

### **Mandate**

The Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid (CSHA) promotes the involvement of clergy and laity in caring for the needs of others according to the Gospel teachings and Tradition of the Church.

## **Membership**

Archbishop Melchisedek, *Episcopal Liaison*; Donna Karabin, *Chair*; Chaplain Timothy Yates; Priest Seth Earl; Arlene Kallaur; Diana Pasca; Susan Schlasta; Nancy Van Dyken; Fr. Steven Voytovich, *consultant*; Popadija Kitty Vitko, *Compassion in Action*; Matushka Wendy Cwiklinski, *Disabilities Advocate*; *Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry, and Living Will Task Force*: Fr. Thomas Moore; Fr. Paul Fetsko; Deacon Mark Barna; Nick Ressetar

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

Two Greatest Commandments: “

The first commandment is *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”*  
*Luke 10:27*

These words of Jesus Christ in His Gospel teachings are the foundation and motivation for every action of genuine Christian life. In fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ, we fulfill these commandments in our worship, our personal and corporate prayer lives, and in loving, merciful and humble service to others. We receive the sacramental graces and go out together to do the work of Christ drawing all people to Him for their eternal salvation and “For the Life of the World”.

According to this and other Gospel teachings and the Tradition of the Church the Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid Department is given the mandate to promote the involvement of clergy and laity in caring for the needs of others. In recent years, it focused mainly on four areas:

1. Parish Life – parish development and ministering to one another within our faith communities;
2. Matthew 25 Outreach Ministries - serving those in need locally, nationally and internationally;
3. Senior Life - addressing the needs of both active and frail seniors; and
4. Family Life - supporting parents and children in everyday life and times of challenge.

CSHA encourages ministries in these areas on all levels of OCA life: parishes, deaneries and dioceses. In coordination with clergy and laity throughout the Church, resources are developed for ministry programs involving the faithful of all ages. CSHA collaborates with other OCA Church Ministries, members of the Orthodox jurisdictions in North America, and U.S. and worldwide humanitarian organizations, e.g. IOCC, OCMC, FOCUS North America, Church World Service, and Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM).

CSHA's programs and resource materials are integral parts in building up vibrant Christ-centered parishes in the Orthodox Church in America.

In his 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council Address in 2015, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon identified Four Pillars for expanding the OCA mission in the next triennium: Spiritual Life, Stewardship, Missions and Evangelism, and External Relations. The department members discussed the pillars at the time and some had the opportunity to discuss them with His Beatitude. The belief was and is that the mandate, ongoing work and resources of the Christian Service Department are important factors in strengthening and sustaining the Four Pillars into the future.

As we gather in 2018 "by the Grace of the Holy Spirit" for the 19<sup>th</sup> All American Council, we will concentrate on the Four Pillars in more depth. Our preparation before the Council and our participation in the Forums during the Council will guide us into fuller understanding of how maturity in Spiritual Life and added developments in Evangelization and Relations with Others can lead the OCA into significant and sustainable growth.

Questions are provided for us to consider the Forum themes more deeply. Four of them are:

1. How Can We Improve Our Personal Relationship to Christ?
2. How Can We More Effectively Establish Missions and Revitalize Our Churches?
3. How Can We More Effectively Reach Our Parishioners?
4. How Can We Develop Our Relations with Other Orthodox Churches, Non-Orthodox and Non-Christians, and the Civic and Secular Community?

Reading these questions with Luke 10:27 and the CSHA mandate in mind, the conclusion is that faith made manifest in works of charity in the love of Christ make personal and parish life more meaningful, building them up, edifying them, not only for the servant but also for those being served. Ministries and humanitarian outreach can serve well as the meeting point where the OCA, its parishes and other faith-based and

civic groups converge and, as Fr. Alexander Schmemmann says in his book “For the Life of the World”, “hold together in faith, in love, in action!”

The second commandment is *“For I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, I was naked, I was sick, I was in prison ... You gave me food, You gave me drink, You welcomed me, You clothed me, You visited me, You came to me ... You did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me. Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:35-36*

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

Going forward from the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC, Christian Service Department members focused on the review and evaluation of current programs, resource development, communications and future events.

*Department Meetings:* His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon invited CSHA Chair, Donna Karabin, to meet with him on September 15, 2016 to discuss department programs and needs. The in-person conversation proved to be an important opportunity to provide information on past accomplishments, present activities and plans for the future. His Beatitude’s questions, comments and counsel on the Compassion in Action Ministry, Parish Ministry Resources, the Orthodox Living Will, and communications were a great encouragement. The dialogue provided assurance of Archpastoral interest and support for which the department is most grateful.

CSHA conducts its work through monthly conference calls. It is a rare occasion to have an actual meeting. There were two opportunities this past triennium. One was in May of 2016 when members met for a meeting in Alexandria, VA with travel expenses paid out-of-pocket in order to preserve the limited CSHA budget for ministry purposes. The second opportunity was a meeting and retreat in December of 2016 at the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, PA. The gracious hospitality of Mother Christophora and the community in the monastic setting enriched the meeting experience. Both in-person meetings were productive and morale building, affirming the members’ calling to serve the Lord and our neighbor through the department ministries.

In the triennium, Donna Karabin represented CSHA at various events. In 2017, she gave presentations at the February Metropolitan Council meeting and the March Holy Synod meeting. The opportunities to meet in person with church-wide and diocesan representatives was most valuable for introducing department programs and resources with the benefit of discussion and feedback from the hierarchs, clergy and laity.

Also in March of 2017, Matushka Thekla Hatfield extended an invitation to Donna to speak at St. Vladimir’s Seminary to the women students and seminarian wives of the St. Juliana Society. Her presentation on CSHA’s work and resources was followed by discussion of parish ministries and the varied roles of clergy wives. While at SVS,

Donna met with Fr. Adrian Budica, Director of Field Education and CPE Supervisor, for a discussion on the Compassion in Action Ministry. She also met with Dr. Albert Rossi, long-time supporter of the department and author of several articles in Parish Ministry Resources.

Other events attended by the department chair and members were for International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM), and Church World Service (CWS), with opportunities to discuss CSHA and its resources.

CSHA tried unsuccessfully to coordinate a Parish Ministries Conference for 2017. Locating an available, affordable and suitable site was one of many obstacles in planning. CSHA is most appreciative of the support and encouragement of the Most Reverend Melchisedek, the Most Reverend Mark and the Most Reverend Michael during the conference speculations. Lessons learned will be useful for a future PMC.

*Diocesan Ministry Network:* CSHA members have been contacting Diocesan hierarchs and chancellors to seek their support in developing a communication network made up of representatives from each OCA diocese in an initiative to strengthen parish ministries and charitable outreach programs throughout the Church. The Network is made up of clergy and lay liaisons who provide information on their diocesan and parish programs to the department and likewise communicate CSHA news to the diocese. Sharing the Good News of successful outreach and ministry programs will inspire new parish initiatives throughout the OCA.

Those dioceses participating at the time of this report are: Matushka Krystal (Xenia) Royer (Bulgarian); Matushka Vera Proctor (Midwest); Diana Pasca (NY-NJ); Fr. Timothy Yates (South); James (Skip) Mersereau (Washington, DC); and Fr. David Lowell (West).

We welcome the appointment of clergy or lay men or women of any age from the dioceses of Alaska, Canada, Eastern PA, New England, Western PA and the Albanian and Romanian dioceses to serve as Diocesan Ministry Representatives to CSHA. Names may be sent to [csa@oca.org](mailto:csa@oca.org).

*Parish Ministry Resources:* OCA's [Parish Ministry Resources](#) (PMR) is the cornerstone of CSHA's work. It is an online resource for parishes, church organizations or anyone searching for information on charitable outreach projects, parish development or other faith and family related topics. The nearly 300 articles are written by clergy and laity on eight themes: [Theology of Lay Ministry](#), [Community Service](#), [Parish Development](#), [Witness and Mission](#), [Stewardship Education](#), [Family Life](#), [Youth and College Ministries](#) and [Seniors](#).

The PMR serves as a clearinghouse of information to inspire and guide growing Matthew 25 and other ministries in the OCA and in the broader internet audience. New articles are added each year while older articles are updated and refreshed for today's

readers. From 2015 to 2018, the following articles were introduced with others planned by the time the 19<sup>th</sup> AAC is convened:

[Personal Examination for Clergy and Church Workers](#) by Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko

[Beyond Alcoholism: Other Addictions](#) by Albert S. Rossi, PhD (St. Vladimir's Seminary)

[Parish to Parish: Mission and Ministry in the Diocese of the South](#) by Fr. William Mills

[Personhood and an Aging Mind and Body](#) by Peter Kavanaugh (OCAMPR)

[Expanding the Mission in the Jersey Shore Area](#) by Deacon Alexander Smida

[Combating the Storm as a Frontline Responder](#) by V. Rev. Thomas Moore

[Serving the Poor -- Orthodox Christians Coming Together as Community in Southwest Detroit](#) by Janet Damian

When the "Landmark Survey of Women in the Orthodox Church" was being conducted at Fordham University, Patricia Bouteneff made contact with CSHA. Our response included three PMR articles on the ministry of women in the mission of the Church.

The Archdiocese of Eastern PA requested permission to post PMR articles on their website. The department has long encouraged dioceses and parishes to post and distribute the articles, no permission necessary. In addition to guiding outreach and ministry, they can be used in discussion groups.

CSHA made a request to Ryan Platte, OCA's IT Manager, for a report of the PMR's online activity. He provided a twelve month summary by unique page views and raw analytical data and compared it with the previous twelve month period. The data provides insight to the effect of the department's featuring of specific articles and also reveals the volume of readers accessing the PMR through independent searches. All eight sections of the PMR had activity in the time periods studied.

The main sources of PMR articles are clergy and lay men and women in local parishes. We encourage rectors and parish leaders to contact [csa@oca.org](mailto:csa@oca.org) about possible submissions from their communities on any of the themes.

*Compassion in Action: Parish Ministry Training (CiA):* Our years of collaboration with the Office of Institutional Chaplaincies and V. Rev. Dr. Steven Voytovich have borne fruit. The Compassion in Action pilot program at St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church (Bulgarian Diocese) in Fenton, MI is now an established and sustainable OCA ministry. Deacon Michael Schlaak and a faithful group of lay volunteers, with the support of

former rector, Fr. Paul Jannakos, and current rector, Fr. Gabriel Bilas, plus the parish, have undertaken this new-generation visitation ministry. After a period of discernment, they entered into a formal training program conducted on site at St. Mary's by CiA leaders, Nancy Van Dyken and Fr. Timothy Yates. They are now equipped to provide a personal Orthodox Christian presence of empathy, caring and listening for someone in the parish or in the outside community who is suffering in some way -- physically, mentally, emotionally and/or spiritually. "To clarify, this ministry of caregiving does not focus on 'doing things' for the sufferer (e.g., cleaning the house, helping him/her get into the shower) but, rather, focuses upon the care receiver's need for an Orthodox person's presence as the center and sole reason for the visit" (Concept Book p. 7). Deacon Michael Schlaak and the lay volunteers are spreading the love of Christ through their compassionate presence with people at a Soup Kitchen/Warming Center and other facilities such as hospices, a veteran's hospital, nursing homes and through individual contact.

Fr. James Parnell and All Saints Orthodox Church in Hartford, CT (Archdiocese of New England) have completed the CiA application process. Nancy Van Dyken made an introductory visit to All Saints to meet with Fr. James, the Parish Council, parishioners and an interested core group. She is serving as mentor for their discernment as they work through the Development Kit website. Training will follow and their program will launch when CiA leaders, Fr. James and the volunteers know the time is right.

Early in 2018, Nancy Van Dyken accepted the leadership role for Compassion in Action and renewed strategic planning efforts with Popadija Kitty Vitko and Donna Karabin. Consideration of other parishes for potential CiA programs is underway. During the growth process, additional mentors are being recruited.

Compassion in Action development is dependent on sufficient financial support to exist and grow. The CSHA annual budget and assistance from the OCA Stewards are inadequate to meet these needs. In February of 2018, the blessing of a \$15,000 gift was given by Archpriest John Vitko and Popadija Kitty to provide for mentor and trainer travel, administrative expenses and a small stipend for the CiA director. Popadija Kitty served many years on the CiA Leadership Team and now serves as a consultant. Everyone involved in CSHA and CiA extends deepest gratitude to her and Fr. John for their faithful sponsorship and spiritual support of this worthy ministry.

The Compassion in Action: Parish Ministry Training program has been blessed by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon "for use in the parish setting to aid the faithful of our parish communities to realize their calling to such a ministry of presence." Fr. Steven Voytovich and CSHA members envision an expanding Compassion in Action program to parishes throughout the OCA.

*Orthodox Living Will:* As part of its Family Life Ministry, CSHA has long been committed to providing resources for end-of-life care, a time when families need guidance in making faith-informed decisions. With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop

Melchisedek, an Orthodox Living Will Task Force was appointed to develop a formal and legal Orthodox resource. Archpriest Thomas Moore was the Coordinator along with members, Priest Paul Fetsko, Director of Ethics at Mercy Health Systems, Fort Smith, AR, Deacon Mark Barna, co-author of the book “A Christian Ending”, Charleston, SC, and Nicholas Ressetar, Chief of Staff at Costopoulos, Foster and Fields, Harrisburg, PA. They developed two comprehensive legal documents consistent with the teachings of the Orthodox Faith which were presented to the Holy Synod of Bishops for approval in July 2015. Their archpastoral blessing was received in October and the documents were published on the OCA web site on November 13, 2015.

[A Gift for my Loved Ones](#) This package contains everything necessary to know should one become disabled or incapacitated and unable to make decisions on one’s own. It includes a Health Care Power of Attorney and Advance Directive for Health Care—Living Will.

[Another Gift for my Loved Ones](#) This package contains everything necessary to know to arrange a burial and funeral—an Advance Directive for Funeral Care.

The CSHA department was in touch with several OCA dioceses before their annual assemblies to invite them and their parishes to announce the availability of the two Living Will documents. They were encouraged to post them on their websites to give clergy and faithful of all ages the opportunity to become familiar with them. The wise consideration of personal desires for medical treatment options, end-of-life care, funeral and burial preferences is best undertaken before a crisis arises. In the common event when families are called upon to make medical treatment decisions for loved ones, these legal documents ease their burden.

Of note, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon requested several sets for use by retired bishops and others.

*Church World Service (CWS):* The OCA is represented at the CWS annual meetings by Arlene Kallaur, CSHA member and official OCA Representative to CWS, Protopresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky, OCA Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations and Archpriest Alexander Kuchta. The large gatherings provide opportunities for Pan-Orthodox and Ecumenical discussions with the thirty-seven faith groups, two being the OCA and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. As part of the longstanding relationship in humanitarian efforts, CSHA continues to promote two parish level programs: the CWS CROP Hunger Walks to help relieve hunger worldwide and the Gift of the Heart Kits which are important in disaster response for CWS and IOCC. OCA’s annual \$500 donation to CWS is funded by the CSHA budget. Arlene Kallaur submitted reports to the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council and expressed her concerns with the increased numbers of refugees coming from various countries needing assistance. She reported that in spite of diminished funding, CWS and other agencies continue to settle refugees who have completed the vetting process.



Of historic importance for the 2016 CWS meeting was the presentation by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon titled “The Face of Christ: A Missiological Reflection”. In it he expressed Orthodox Christianity's monastic tradition and its relationship to the Church's outreach to the hungry, the poor and the displaced.

*Communications:* CSHA's discussion on Communications concluded that while CSHA provides high-value and timeless resources that greatly contribute to the Mission of the OCA, more needs to be done to reach the target audience – laity of every age, seminary families, monastics, clergy and bishops.

CSHA has built an online presence through an active Facebook page known as [OCA Parish Ministry](#) to better promote the new PMR articles and ministry news. Timely PMR articles and quotes from Church Fathers related to Matthew 25 ministries are posted, all with icons, photos and graphics. Other features include promos for IOCC, FOCUS North America, OCMC, CWS, OCA Stewards and OCA parish ministry programs. We are growing in numbers of people reached with statistics showing an international and ecumenical scope. As pleasing as that is, we are eager to reach OCA faithful. We invite OCA bishops, the clergy and laity to visit our page and share our ministry news with others in their communities.

Resources and ministry news are communicated also through the [CSHA page](#) on the OCA Website, OCA News Features and OCA's Facebook Page, Diocesan Assemblies and Meetings, Parish Ministries Conferences, All-American Councils, and the Diocesan Ministry Network. CSHA is appreciative of the technical support and advice of the OCA Web Team, Archpriest John Matusiak, Ryan Platte and Matushka Jessica Fuhrman.

OCA's IT Manager, Ryan Platte, gave counsel on internet marketing strategies which are under consideration. As step one, CSHA member Nancy Van Dyken designed a template for MailChimp mass emailing. Fr. Seth Earl is working with her as we finalize the email list and develop content. We are hopeful that we can build, as Ryan says, “a larger and more enthusiastic audience for CSHA releases.”

The department's newest means of Communication is the design of a website to consolidate all of CSHA's program information in one place. We are fortunate that Fr. Seth came forward with the idea and that he is willing to design and maintain the website. It is expected to be up and running by the 19<sup>th</sup> AAC.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

With confidence and commitment, department members will maintain and strengthen CSHA programs and resources. New articles will continue to be added to Parish Ministry Resources while past articles will be refreshed. The Compassion in Action ministry will focus on a wise strategic plan for expanding the number of participating parishes. The value of the Orthodox Living Will documents to all families and faithful will continue to be promoted. As members strive for increased communication and

interaction with dioceses and parishes, there will be further development of the CSHA website, Mail Chimp emails, social media and the Diocesan Ministry Network. Increasing communication with Pan-Orthodox humanitarian agencies, ministries of sister Orthodox Churches and other faith-based groups will be explored.

In communicating the development of charitable works, in-person gatherings of ministry-minded people are most valuable whether in a small retreat setting or large Parish Ministries Conference. Discussions are underway on future events that will engage professionals and experienced ministry leaders with the faithful who feel called to serve others in need. As decisions are made and planning progresses, announcements will be made via the OCA website, the Diocesan Ministry Network and social media. Invitations from parishes or dioceses for CSHA to visit their local communities are welcomed.

### **How to Address the Theme in the Future**

At the March 2018 department conference call, CSHA member, Diana Pasca asked everyone, *"How is Jesus Christ active in your life?"* It is a vital question to ask ourselves daily, even hourly, as part of our personal spiritual discipline and surely as often when we are undertaking works of service in the Name of Christ and His Church. In our calling to inspire, encourage and enable the faithful in practical terms to serve one another and those in need, we must be vigilant in the witness we present. In fervent prayer, we must seek God's will in the decisions we make in our shared ministry. Will our witness, prayers and good will be sufficient to help meet the physical needs and to touch hearts with the love of Jesus Christ? We will make every attempt to do so, to be faithful to the tasks given to us and through them to spread the Good News of the Gospel teachings of Christ.

We look to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon and our Holy Synod Liaison, Archbishop Melchisedek, to provide their archpastoral blessings, guidance and support to the CSHA members and their mandate.

### **Conclusion**

CSHA's membership is made up of clergy and laity who are deeply committed to the OCA as well as to their own dioceses and parishes shown by their active involvement at each level. The chairperson is modestly compensated from limited budget resources while members serve as volunteers who generously donate hours of their time, skills and knowledge gained from their years of experience in Church work. Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid along with the other OCA Church Ministries are to be recognized for their essential roles, while joining with hierarchs, administrators, clergy and lay leaders, and all the faithful, in making it possible for the Orthodox Church in America to fulfill its mission as the body of Christ and autocephalous Church in North America, and "... to witness to the truth, and by God's grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Christ's way of sanctification and eternal salvation to all."

## **D. Department of Continuing Education**

### **Mandate**

The Department of Continuing Education reports directly to the Holy Synod of Bishops, carrying out the Holy Synod's mandate to provide for the ongoing development of clergy and lay leaders. To carry out the continuing education mandate established by the Holy Synod of Bishops for clergy and lay leaders:

1. To recommend standards for Continuing Clergy Development (CCD).
2. To create and deliver continuing education offerings and materials in response to periodic needs assessments and the demands of the national church.
3. To foster collegial clergy and lay leader development by recruiting presenters and their offerings.
4. To collaborate with other departments, diocesan and local bodies, and seminaries in the creation and delivery of CCD offerings.
5. To maintain records of CCD accredited offerings and clergy compliance with CCD standards established by the Holy Synod of Bishops.

### **Membership**

Archbishop Nathaniel, *Episcopal Liaison*, Fr. Ian Pac-Urar, *Director*

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Five-Year Curriculum:* The Department has developed a five-year sequence of short courses in Professional, Legal and Ethical Topics. These courses were presented to OCA clergy over the past five years and are now available online for on-demand viewing, for use in facilitator-led groups and classes, or as live presentations.

The Department recommends to the Holy Synod of Bishops that all new OCA clergy be required to complete the sequence in the first five years of their pastorates.

*Year 1: Professional, Legal and Ethical Dimensions of Clergy Sexual Misconduct:* Sexual misconduct is one of the most destructive forces in the Church. This course examines the nature of the pastoral relationship, and surveys the ethical, professional, legal and interpersonal issues involved.

*Year 2: The Church and the Law:* Clergy must be able to see the law as an ally rather than an adversary. This course provides an overview of the relationship between the Church and American civil law.

*Year 3: Parish Advancement: The Stewardship Model:* Parish Funding was identified as a top priority in the 2013 Needs Assessment. This course surveys the scriptural foundations of stewardship and offers practical tools to promote stewardship in parishes.

*Year 4: Professional, Legal and Ethical Dimensions of Working with Addictions:* This topic was identified as a top priority in the 2013 Needs Assessment. With the rise of the national opioid addiction crisis, pastors must have basic pastoral response tools and skills. They must know the limits of their own expertise and understand when to engage clinical specialists.

*Year 5: The Pastoral Life Cycle:* This course was developed out of a felt need for working clergy to understand their own developmental cycles as pastors. Models of the clergy life cycle are presented, with exercises for proactive engagement with the future.

*Clergy Peer Learning Groups:* The Department cooperates with the Department of Pastoral Life to promote and facilitate Clergy Peer Learning Groups. Clergy may report their Peer Learning Group hours for Continuing Education credit, although this does not supplant such continuing education as may be required by the Holy Synod or the Diocesan Bishop. More detailed information is available from the Department of Pastoral Life.

## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

### *Looking Forward Challenges:*

*Compliance:* The Department continues to work for full compliance by clergy and bishops. We look to the success of those dioceses that provide a full twenty-hour program annually as inspiration for those that still struggle to do so.

*Funding:* The Department remains underfunded, largely due to under-compliance.

*Time:* Constraints imposed by the existing levels of funding and staffing mean that insufficient time and manpower is dedicated to the work of the Department.

### *Looking Forward: Opportunities:*

*Cooperation with other providers:* The Department presently works together with dioceses and seminaries, and employs presenters from outside the OCA to provide educational experiences for clergy. These efforts bring opportunities for mutual learning and growth, and are *de facto* areas of inter-jurisdictional collaboration.

*Parish Development:* While current offerings, especially in the area of small parish development, are excellent, there is a vast, unexplored field of specific skill sets and approaches to parish growth that need to be nurtured in clergy and lay leaders. Offerings might include in-depth training and coaching for parish level, lay leaders in youth work, Bible study, stewardship and group dynamics.

*In-Church expertise:* The levels of education and expertise among OCA clergy and faithful far surpass those of a few generations ago. This offers the opportunity to engage our own people in providing educational experiences, while it presents the challenge of identifying and recruiting those people.

### *Looking Forward: Goals:*

The Department has identified the following goals for the near term:

1. *Build compliance* by improving and intensifying communication with diocesan bishops, clergy and parish leaders.
2. *Build online delivery* by continuing to collaborate with other entities.
3. *Enhance learning materials* for the existing Five Year Curriculum, and seek to have the curriculum required of all new OCA clergy.
4. *Begin training in Bible Study leadership for clergy and laity.* This was identified as a top priority in the 2013 Needs Assessment.
5. *Begin Lay Leadership Development* by offering Bible Study training first, and simultaneously conducting a Lay Leadership needs assessment to identify further areas of study.

## **E. Department of Evangelization**

### **Mandate**

The Department of Evangelization bears witness to the One, Holy Catholic,<sup>SEP</sup> and Apostolic Church to all who ask, seek, and knock, while encouraging every<sup>SEP</sup> Orthodox Christian actively to engage his or her missionary vocation.

### **Membership**

Archbishop Michael, *Episcopal Liaison*; Fr. John Parker, *Chair*; Past and Current Planting Grant Priests, Past Chairs of the Department, *Planting Grant Mentors*: Fr. Jason Foster and Fr. Andre Paez

### **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

The unmoored culture in which we dwell, at least in the United States—and I suspect Canada—is one which redefines life and redefines world, on its own terms, and with every effort to cast off the shackles of any form of religion, particularly Christianity.

But these shackles, it seems to me, are shackles not our own, at least as far as Orthodox Christianity is described by Fr Alexander in *For the Life of the World*. Though we possess and enact our colorful rituals in various languages in byzantine poetry, the Orthodox Faith is the one, sane anchor any human being has with which to cling to hope, the hope of a meaningful death, which would inspire, by anticipation, a meaningful and Spirit-filled life.

The culture, it seems to me, is casting off a form of Christianity which is devoid of life; it is a disfigurement, not a transfiguration. The Culture is throwing off religion, a religion based in Protestant categories, which complexifies the simple and simplifies the complex. It concretizes the mysterious, and cloaks in mystery the obvious. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the various forms of the “Lord’s Supper”, in which almost no Protestant considers the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as he gave them: “the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.’ [and] Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.’”

Orthodox Christianity, we believe, is not a better way to live. It is life. Life outside of Christ, the unbaptized life, is simply not life. And yet the Culture is burned, very burned, by “accept Jesus and be saved”—the simplistic and mechanistic route of evangelization offered by the (largely Protestant) heterodox. Salvation is not that simple, and life, with all of its joys and sorrows, is not that simple.

This is our conundrum: our lands are white for harvest, but our neighbors think we Orthodox are just an esoteric version of what they are [rightly] rejecting—if they know us or about us at all. The Department of Evangelization aims to make sense of this conundrum, and to show the real, and ancient, and reliable, and trustworthy, and profound, and peaceful, and joyful life in Christ which was once for all delivered to the saints, and is held in trust by us. Woe to us who do not share it—like the priest and the Levite who crossed by on the other side of the road before the Samaritan came along.

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

### *Current Labors:*

1. Manages the Church Planting grant program, which provides up to three year’s matching grant (\$24,000; \$20,000; \$16,000) to allow a full-time pastor in a recently formed mission parish. This include receiving annual applications, recommending grants to the Synod, and appointing mentors to help oversee the grant during the three years. Each successfully graduated planting grant priest becomes eligible to be a mentor to new missions.
2. Offers a regular Ancient Faith Radio Podcast: Lord Send Me—thoughts and reflections on the Great Commission, and on the deepening life of discipleship.
3. Writes occasional essays for the [www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net) -- the Orthodox Christian Network, on matters related to the Good News.
4. Takes an active role in dialogue with those interested in moving towards the Orthodox Faith.
5. Consults on planting of mission parishes in various dioceses.
6. Partners with the OCMC, specifically with Short-term Missions team to Mexico. Represents the OCA on the Board of the OCMC.
7. Offers motivational talks/retreats at diocesan and parish levels.
8. Teaches/speaks at the OCA seminaries on Missions and Evangelism
9. Attempts to build bridges with similarly-tasked departments in the Greek and Antiochian Archdioceses.

### *Diocesan Work:*

1. St Basil’s Mission, Wilmington, NC: keynote for their parish feast, 2015.
2. Speaker at “Speaking to Secular America”—my talk was entitled, “Inspiring the Apathetic: Reaching the Nones and Dones.”—October 2015.

3. St Katherine's, Carlsbad, CA: a mission visit in December 2015 with a 2 hour talk/presentation on Nones and Dones.
4. (outside of the OCA)—annual Keynote, two talks, and preaching at St Andrew's Orthodox Church, Riverside, CA (AOCA) in early December 2015.
5. Speaker, Diocese of the West Annual Missions Retreat (February 2016).
6. Keynote, Centennial Celebration, Ss Peter and Paul, Syracuse, NY. June 2016.
7. Speaker, St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Pittsburgh (October 2016).
8. Diocese of Western PA: formal conversations with His Eminence, Abp Melchisedek concerning clergy brotherhood and evangelism.
9. Diocese of New England: in/formal conversations with His Eminence, Abp Nikon concerning implementation of a Revitalization Grant.
10. Retreat for Holy Ascension Antiochian Orthodox Church, West Chester, PA, March 23-25.

*Grant Retreats—Retreats offered by Grant Graduates to Planting Grant Missions: Tempe, AZ; Beaufort, SC; Annapolis, MD; Rolla, MO.*

*Mission School:* Taught and participated in Panel Discussions at the First, Second, and Third Mission Schools in Detroit and (2x) in NY.

*Assembly Evangelization Study:* Prepared for, participated in, analyzed, and wrote a chapter for The Assembly of Bishops' study on Evangelism. Study was published on April 24, 2017: <http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/2017/evangelization-study-report>

OCMC: Twice Annual Board meetings, conference calls, etc.

*International:*

1. Scheduled to give talks in Joensuu, Finland, September 24-26, 2016, on Missions, Evangelization, and Church Planting from an American perspective.
2. First-Annual Pilgrimage, Department Co-sponsored with Archbishop Michael and Diocese of NY/NY—to Holy Land. June 4-16, 2017. Intention is to build pilgrimage each year, to live the Living Tradition of the Church, and to see the connection between our Church and the wider Orthodox World.
3. Significant, in-depth conversations, with the blessing of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, regarding the possibility of short-term mission teams from the USA (OCMC, OCA) for the purposes of direct evangelism in Jerusalem, Youth and Campus Ministry, Pastoral/Educational support of local Clergy, and the provision of Arab-language materials for the local churches.
4. September 2017: participant in Lausanne Orthodox Initiative, Cambridge,

England.

*Correspondence and Conversations:* Sporadic emails from inquires (both individual, and for church-planting requests). Ongoing in some cases; Church planting requests are farmed to nearest OCA dean.

*Media:*

Monthly (scheduled) posts on oca.org—from each of the Planting Grant Missions.

*Website*

Preparing for overhaul of [www.goodnews.oca.org](http://www.goodnews.oca.org). First-stage conversation with Fr Joel Weir to manage the site.

*Ancient Faith Radio*

Re-launched podcast with new focus on Discipleship and deepening our spiritual roots. Ancient Faith Radio: Lord Send Me.

*Orthodox Christian Network (OCN)*

Occasional essays for OCN.

*5 Sees*

Reviewed the film “Becoming Truly Human” and formed a small committee of Mission Grant Parish Priests to review the film; fostered inter-Orthodox Cooperation for the viewing and distribution of the film. Proposed OCA financial support for the production company to produce further films which foster evangelism among millennials, nones, and dones.

*Outreach Efforts:*

1. *Saddleback Church/Megachurch Pastors:* Attended and participated in a gathering of 55 of America’s largest megachurch pastors at Saddleback Church on Monday, August 21. Offered an Orthodox Christian perspective (alone among 45 non-denom pastors) on Racism/Bigotry. Personal meetings with 4 of the pastors for ongoing conversation about Orthodoxy.
2. *Anglican Church in North America:* Annual or Bi-annual Anglican/Orthodox Dialogue.

*Non-Orthodox Clergy Conversations:* In very active conversation with an Anglican priest, referred to me through Ancient Faith Radio.

In “interested” conversations with 2 Anglicans and 1 non-denominational pastor. The Anglicans I met in Philadelphia when visiting Rick Warren. The Non-denominational pastor was introduced to me through the Chancellor of Western Pennsylvania, Fr Bill Evansky.

3. *Other:* Gave interview for an ecumenical study on Orthodox Parishes and Spiritual vitality.

**Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**



In 2016 I worked closely with His Eminence, Archbishop Michael (NY/NJ) to propose Priorities for the Department, especially with respect to the use of a million dollar bequest left to the Orthodox Church in America for Evangelism.

The Department of Evangelization exists as a servant of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, and functions in various capacities, the chief of which is to (re)develop/nourish/nurture/encourage/build an evangelistic heart and mind in the Dioceses, Parishes, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America. The various current (and some suggested) areas of ministry are listed below. These are far from complete, but represent a spring-board for formal organization.

The Orthodox Church in America, we state humbly, is the only jurisdiction on North America soil which began as a missionary endeavor, and which maintains to this day a unique desire to evangelize our neighbors, regardless of their background or ethnicity. We also have the talent and financial resources **already in our OCA** to be North American leaders formally among our sister Churches.

Please consider the following priorities, and please consider the responsible use of bequest funds to develop this Department into a robust engine for the Great Commission.

1. *Manage Planting Grants*

- a. Receive and review applications.
- b. Make Nominations to the Holy Synod
- c. Oversee recipients
  - i. Receive reports
  - ii. Establish Mentors for visits and counsel

2. *Visit Dioceses*

- a. First purpose: to understand from a personal experience the strengths and weaknesses of the various dioceses, through the bishop's lens, and by conversation with clergy and laity.
- b. Then: to encourage, through the deaneries, the preparation of Mission Planting Goals (a list of ranked cities or towns for planned mission planting).
  - i. Encourage every deanery to plant at least one church per year.
  - ii. To facilitate the rejuvenation of older and/or declining parishes.

3. *Teach in seminaries*

- a. Encourage the teaching of missions/evangelism and outreach in all three OCA seminaries, and to partner with Holy Cross in Boston, and perhaps others.
- b. To encourage a common approach to this teaching across seminary boundaries
- c. To develop an intensive program at St Herman's Seminary that includes time of Retreat and Study on Spruce Island and in the Archives, for the benefit of both historical and ongoing missionary labor in North America.
- d. To Encourage the Study of Evangelism at all levels of Graduate and Doctoral levels: MDiv, MTh, MA, DMIN, perhaps by the establishment of a scholarship for one or more students writing Masters Theses or Doctoral projects on Evangelism in North America.

4. *Develop a Vibrant and Consistent media presence*
  - a. management and development of [GOODNEWS.oca.org](http://GOODNEWS.oca.org)
  - b. Ancient Faith Radio Podcast
  - c. Blog at the Orthodox Christian Network
  - d. Develop "Quest"--a print and online journal for Seekers and Doubters, partnered with St Katherine's Orthodox College (currently under development, with planned implementation in 2017)
  - e. Develop a video component/youtube channel? (see 10 below)
  
5. *Offer/be available for Retreats and Conferences, especially on practical evangelism topics and church planting.*
  - a. Develop "Evangelistically-minded" clergy and laity in the OCA to transform the Orthodox Church in America into a primarily-evangelistic church.
  - b. A Ministry of Encouragement.
  
6. *Coordinate and Encourage College, Campus Ministry such as OCF Chapters which are intentionally mission-minded, reaching out to the most curious demographic in North America.*
  - a. To help encourage and establish Discipleship Houses on campuses--houses of intentional Orthodox Christian Community with a common prayer life--by gender, of course.
  - b. To assist in the encouragement of full-time campus evangelistic chaplaincies based on successful models (Annapolis College Ministry at the Naval Academy and St John's College, for example). And perhaps to establish a "planting grant" type grant for such a purpose--a three year grant to help establish such a chaplaincy in a given location.
  
7. *Work External to the OCA proper*
  - a. Board Membership, OCMC. Serve and encourage other OCA Participation.
  - b. Encourage short- and long-term missionary service.
  - c. Assembly of Bishops Study on Evangelism in North America (in process)
  - d. Build partnerships with Sister Churches, especially GOA and AOCA.
  - e. International: by invitation, to share our evangelistic experience and to learn from our sister churches in other places (Finland, Sept 2016)
  - f. Dialogue with Pastors and Non-Orthodox Clergy and Parishes specifically interested in being received into the Orthodox Faith through the OCA. (current: ACNA; individuals, ongoing)
  - g. Foot in Door Dialogue—Saddleback, for example
  
8. *Historical Projects*
  - a. Develop Evangelism Archives
  - b. Publish works of St Sebastian Dabovich
  - c. Fund Replica of Gift Chalice and Diskos at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak.  

This project could be a fund-raiser for Alaska and Mexico (if we can get Mexican Silversmiths to do the replication). Parishes can commission a set for themselves. OCA could commission a few as International Gifts (2019 is 225 Years since 1794
  - d. Bells as Evangelism (Blagovest, the largest bell, means "Annunciation of Good news").

- i. Perhaps encouraging the ringing of bells as an Evangelistic idea.
- ii. Perhaps studies of various churches whose bells were gifts of the Russian Church--missionary gifts. Are there other historical chalices? Gospel books? Antimins?

9. *Continue to develop a robust, excellent Mission's School*

10. *Develop a website and media for lapsed Orthodox similar to [www.catholicscomehome.org](http://www.catholicscomehome.org)*

- a. This particular site seems influenced by the Mormons significant media blitz.
- b. Vast numbers of Orthodox Christians have left the church for all sorts of reasons. It may be wise to make a concerted effort to restore them to the Church.

11. *I am not certain at this point if parish re-vitalization should be a facet of this Department, or if it requires specialty care from its own (as of yet unestablished) department.*

These Priorities and any others which should develop will require the development of a staffed Office of Evangelism. We need to think proactively and evangelistically ourselves. We have funds available for creative ministry which we should not hide under a bushel. The implementation of a significant and inspiring vision will lead to additional funding as well as numerical church growth. This principle is usually stated, "money follows vision".

### **How to Address the Theme in the Future**

For the sake of this Triennial report, perhaps it would suffice to suggest the following three possibilities for the three coming years:

- 1. In the worst case scenario, The Department could be reduced simply to the oversight of the Planting Grant.
- 2. Under *status quo* conditions, we could expect and desire basically status quo results. Retreats and talks on evangelization, a handful of growing mission-grant churches, as-doors-open opportunities for bearing witness to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church to individuals and groups around North America and abroad.
- 3. In a significantly visionary funding situation, a vibrant Department could be established with a bona-fide trajectory, measurable goals, and an all out Church-wide effort to build a vision for evangelism about which we have only talked for decades.

### **Conclusion**

Our Church, the Orthodox Church in America, is the inheritor of the Missionary legacy of the Russian Orthodox Church, who came not to bring Russia to America, but who came to bring to the Natives the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church which they

themselves had received from the Greeks eight-hundred years earlier. This is the missionary legacy of St Herman, St Innocent, St Tikhon, and all the other missionary saints. They knew that their task was to give away intact what they had faithfully received. It is the same calling for you and for me.

They labored in the most difficult of climates under the most amazing of circumstances, a quarter of a world—at least—away from home, without the benefit of smart phones and Ipads. They entrusted their life to God, and were willing to go anywhere and do anything for Him.

We stand at a crossroads in time. We can continue the status quo in the somewhat ambiguous “our little church will get by”, or we can step out in faith, trusting that God, who wills that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth, will grant us all that we need to accomplish that to which he calls us. Which route will we choose?

## **F. Department of Liturgical Music and Translation**

### **Mandate**

The Department of Liturgical Music and Translations serves as an advisory body to the Metropolitan and the Holy Synod of Bishops in matters concerning liturgical translations and music, liturgics, and other matters affecting the liturgical life of the Church.

In addition to providing appropriate musical settings for use in worship, the Department produces publications and workshop materials on liturgical singing, develops a coherent and liturgically sound approach to the singing of the divine services, especially in the English language, and coordinates the weekly postings of music, text, and audio file resources available on the OCA web site.

The Department also develops standard liturgical texts, translations, and guidelines which accurately reflect the original texts, while taking into consideration the complexities of usage and nuance.

### **Membership**

Archbishop Irénée, Episcopal Liaison; Archbishop Benjamin, Special Consultant; Dr. David Drillock, Chair; Archimandrite Sergius (Bower); Fr, Sergei Glagolev; Fr. Paul Lazor; Fr. Lawrence Margitich; *Resource People*: Mark Bailey; Doreen Bartholomew; David Barrett; John M Black; Fr, Benedict Churchill; Dn Nicholas Denysenko; Dn Gregory Ealy; Fr. John Erickson; Fr. Joseph Frawley; Robin Freeman; Jessica Fuhrman; Hieromonk Herman (Majkrzak); Beth Johnson; Archimandrite Juvenaly (Repass); Dr Kevin Lawrence; David Lucs; Monk Martin; Fr. Stephan Meholick; Dr Paul Meyendorff; Dr Vladimir Morosan; Walter Obleschuk; Dr Mark Pearson; Mother Raphaela; Dr Nicholas Reeves; Benedict Sheehan, Alexei Shipovalnikov; Fr. Daniel Skvir; Fr. Kirill Sokolov; Philip Sokolov; Sophia Sokolov; Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff; Cindy Voytovich; Carole Wetmore

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Music Downloads*: A major goal of the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations is to provide the necessary musical resources for a parish choir to sing the responses to

all the liturgical services that are called for in the Typikon and celebrated in the local church. These musical resources are posted on the website of the Orthodox Church in America and made available as a free download. Initially, the Department concentrated on making liturgical music available that was not available for purchase from our seminaries and other church sources. As of March 31, 2018, more than 7,000 pages of sheet music have been posted on the website and are currently available for free download.

1. *Troparia and Kontakia Project*: Started in 2002, the Troparia and Kontakia Project has been completed. All 366 days of the calendar year have been provided with musical settings of the appointed Troparia and Kontakia.

Over 2,800 individual settings of troparia and kontakia representing a variety of chant settings (Russian Common Chant/Bakhmetev-Lvov Obikhod, Kievan, Greek (Russo), Galician, Carpatho-Russian, Serbian, Byzantine, and Bulgarian) are posted on the website and available for free downloading. Special "pattern melodies" (Podoben) have also been provided as called for in the Typikon. Included in this section of our website are the following:

- a. troparia and kontakia for 431 individual saints and feast days, covering all the days of the calendar year (366 days).
- b. troparia and kontakia for the Pre-lenten and Lenten Sundays, and Meatfare Saturday
- c. settings of the troparion, kontakion, and hypakhoe for Pascha
- d. troparia and kontakia for the Sundays of the Pentecostarion
- e. more than 400 troparia and kontakia set to the Serbian Chant (in cooperation with the Music Department of the Serbian Orthodox Church)

As of February 1, 2018, we have begun to add to this collection troparia and kontakia in the Obikhod musical setting (Common Chant) using the pronouns *Thou, Thy*. Matushka Beth Johnson has agreed to do the music setting of these texts for posting on the website.

The *Troparia and Kontakia Project* has been well received and is used not only by pastors, choir directors, and singers of churches in the Orthodox Church in America, but also by those responsible for church singing in many churches of other Orthodox jurisdictions. During the first three months of 2018, the Department of Liturgical Music section of the OCA website averaged approximately 30,000 "unique hits" per month.

2. *Musical Settings for Liturgical Services*: The required music for the major feasts of the Church has been posted and we are now in the process of working on music for the Vigil services of the American saints. The music for Vespers, Matins, and the Divine Liturgy for the feasts of St Herman, St Raphael of Brooklyn, and St Alexis of Wilkes-Barre has been completed and most, if not all, of the music for the feasts of St Innocent, St Tikhon, and the New Martyrs of Alaska, Peter and Juvenaly should be completed this year.

Last year we began to post the music for the Pre-lenten and Lenten Sunday Vespers. We should complete this project by the end of this Lenten season. We also plan to complete the music for the Kanons of the Resurrection (only Tone 6 is not posted) and the music for the Resurrection stichera on the Praises (at Matins) in 2018.

The music for Palm Sunday, produced by the DLM when Archbishop Benjamin was chairman of the department, has been scanned and posted for free downloading. We have uploaded to the website music from the booklet "The Hymns of the Weekly Cycle," (compiled and edited by V. Peterson and V. Morosan, and published by the Department in 1989.) We also began to scan and post the music for the Nativity of Christ, a booklet published by the Department of Liturgical Music in 1987.

The music of all sung parts plus the texts of prayers and litanies for the services of Baptism, Matrimony, and the Burial of a Priest (*texts using the pronoun Thou, Thy*) have been completed and posted on the website. In November 2017, we added the music and text for the Burial of a Layperson (136 pages).

Texts that are set to music and posted on the website are reviewed, corrected, and revised when necessary by competent translators who are fluent in Greek, Slavonic, and English. Translators include Archimadrite Juvenaly (Repass), Father Benedict Churchill and Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff. Proofreading and grammatical corrections are done by Dr. Vladimir Morosan. Setting of music in *finale* is done by V. Rev. Lawrence Margitich, Deacon Gregory Ealy, Dr Kevin Lawrence, Walter Obleschuk, David Lucs, John Black, Matushka Sophia Sokolov, and Matushka Beth Johnson. Completed music and texts are then reviewed by the Chairman of the Department before posting.

3. *Texts for Liturgical Services:* In 2014, the Department was requested to issue texts that include both YY (You, Your) and TT (Thou, Thy) versions of these pronouns. Since October 1, 2014 the Department has posted texts for liturgical services in 2 forms, one using *You* and *Your* and one using *Thou* and *Thy* for the pronouns referring to the Divinity.

Last year, approximately 200 liturgical services containing the *propers* of Vespers, pointed to be sung according to the Common Chant, were posted on our website. These included texts for Resurrection Great Vespers and Divine Liturgy for all Sundays, the feasts and saints that call for a Vigil in the "official" Liturgical Calendar and Rubrics, the Presanctified Liturgy for Wednesdays and Fridays of Great Lent, all Saturdays of Great Lent, all Sunday evening Vespers of Great Lent, and all the services of Holy Week with the exception of Holy Friday Matins (12 Gospels) and Holy Saturday Matins (the Praises). The texts for the *propers* for all the services (including Royal Hours and Great Compline) for the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, Theophany, and Pentecost are also posted.

As the postings are in Microsoft Word, these texts can be downloaded and easily adapted for local and particular use. Our liturgical texts are not only used by the members of the Orthodox Church in America and many priests and laypersons of the Antiochian, Serbian, Greek, Carpatho-Russian churches in America, but also by priests and choir directors from parishes in South Africa, United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Ukraine, and Russia.

The services are put together by the Chairman, rubric outlines are provided by Archimandrite Juvenaly and the texts are proofread by Dr Vladimir Morosan. *Thou, Thy* versions were done by Hieromonk Herman from October 2014 through January 2016. Since February 2016, Dr Vladimir Morosan has been responsible for the *Thou, Thy* versions.

4. *On-line Course in Choral Conducting:* In Fall and Winter 2012-13, the on-line course for Beginning Choir Directors was offered by the Department to interested and beginning choir directors in the Diocese of New York-New Jersey. Bishop Michael and the Diocese's Commission on Liturgical Music promoted the course and assisted in the recruiting of students. Based on evaluations submitted by the eight participants, adjustments were made to the course and it has been offered in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

In the six years (2012 through 2017) that the Department has offered this course, 90 students have been registered for the course, of which 72 (80%) have successfully completed it. 40 participants are now serving as choir directors or assistant choir directors in parishes of the Orthodox Church in America: in the archdioceses of Canada and Washington, D. C, and the dioceses of Eastern Pennsylvania, Midwest, New England, New York and New Jersey, the South, and the West. 4 students are directing choirs in the Antiochian Archdiocese, 3 in the Greek Archdiocese, 3 in the American Carpatho-Russian Diocese, 3 in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, 3 in the Serbian Orthodox Church, 1 in the Russian Orthodox Church in England, and 1 in the formerly OCA Church (now Greek Archdiocese) in South Africa.

The course consists of 12 sessions; each session includes both video and textual teaching demonstrations. The first part of the course places special emphasis on the relationship between text and music, accented and non-accented syllables; exercises are focused on learning the beat patterns. The second half of the course concentrates on techniques of conducting chant, singing in phrases, analyzing specific examples of both metered and unmetered music, and preparing the music for conducting. Music examples accompanying each lesson were sung by choir members of St Paul Orthodox Church, Dayton, Ohio. Video recording for the sessions was done by Dr Mark Pearson, former Instructional Technologist and Designer at Earlham College. Dr Pearson designed the online course format and provided technical support and program assistance.

Class sessions are posted at weekly intervals on the course web site (OCA Moodle). The participant is expected to have completed the weekly assignments and be proficient in the conducting exercises by Friday of the week in which each session has been posted.

All participants are required to meet interactively with the teacher of the course, Prof David Drilllock, via *skype videosystem* for a 30-minute session each week. These sessions provide an opportunity for each individual to demonstrate his or her comprehension of each session and the ability to perform the conducting exercises correctly. At these interactive meetings, the learner receives necessary feedback from the instructor together with helpful suggestions for

improvement. Written evaluations from the instructor are then emailed to each participant.

5. *Outlines for Liturgical Services*: A section of the website is devoted to outlines of the fixed order of services with liturgical and rubric comments on each specific part of the service. Currently this section includes tables with information about the variable portions of Vespers, a section of the use of the Psalter in Orthodox worship, an alphabetical index of liturgical terms and references, and short articles on each liturgical component of Vespers. "Outlines for Liturgical Services" is especially useful not only to pastors, choir directors, and church readers but to all those who are interested in learning more about the structure and the liturgical components of our church services.
6. *Tutorial for the Study of the Eight Tones*: Part I of the Tutorial for the learning of the Church Tones, including both the Obikhod (Common Chant) and Kievan "melodies" used for the singing of the *stichera* (Part I), has been completed and is available on our website.

The scheme of the tutorial is to break down each tone and identify its musical phrases. The sequence for the proper use of the melodic phrases is fully explained as well as the "formula" (intonation pattern, the recitation pitch of the body of the phrase, and cadence) for each melodic line. All phrases are illustrated with musical and textual examples.

Work is now beginning on Part II of this tutorial, which will include the tones for the chanting of the *Prokeimena*. Since music for all the *troparia* and *kontakia* that are appointed for each day of the calendar year is available on the website, we do not think it a priority at this time to add an analysis of the *troparia* tones to our tutorial. Part I of the Tutorial was written by David Drillock and Deacon Gregory Ealy; Dr Vladimir Morosan did the editing and provided musical assistance.

7. *Audio Files of Recorded Liturgical Music*: The "Tutorial for the Study of the Eight Tones" also includes recorded choral demonstrations of the written examples for each *stichera* tone, including full (SATB) choir, and individual lines for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. Recordings were done by singers of St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Minneapolis, MN, directed by Deacon Gregory Ealy. We are currently in the process of making arrangements for the recording of the Resurrection *kanons* in the 8 tones. The Department will also make available on the website audio files (MP3) for the *Prokeimena* that will comprise Part II of the Tutorial.
8. *Order of St Romanos*: The Department of Liturgical Music expresses its gratitude to the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops for establishing the Order of St Romanos in 2014, an award that acknowledges the importance of Church music and singing in Orthodox worship. The Order of St Romanos is awarded to arrangers, composers, teachers and conductors of church music. Recipients of this award include Archpriest Sergei Glagolev, Archpriest Igor Soroka, Prof. Dr. David Drillock, Walter Shymansky, Archimandrite Roman [Braga], Dr. Vladimir Morosan, Aleksei V. Shipovalnikov, and John Sutko.

## **G. Department of Pastoral Life**



## **Mandate**

The Department of Pastoral Life works to sustain and support clergy and clergy families, encouraging them to work towards lives of healthy balance so that those ministries to which God has called them, their hierarchs have appointed them, and for which the faithful depend on them may continue unabated and uninterrupted.

The Department of Pastoral Life endeavors always to work in conjunction with diocesan hierarchs either responding to particular needs identified by the Holy Synod or in formulating and developing tools to respond to these needs and which may be employed at the discretion of diocesan bishops. It is our conviction that clergy, as the foremost or front-line workers of our faith, the most local of Church representatives present throughout our lands, must themselves remain fit, strong in the work entrusted to them, for it is by this strength, by this leadership of the immediate, that the local parishes can thrive and that the life of the world becomes unabstracted within the lived reality of Church as community. We believe also that the clergy of this Orthodox Church in America are perhaps its greatest of unsung resources. The depth of experience, the command of knowledge and education, the commitment to such ongoing and frequently demanding service, and the compassion of its application, for all of these things they should be lauded; for too many, they remain frequently unrecognized. This department does not exist as an external corrective nor to apply a professional or expert eye or opinion to the work and vocations of clergy but to harness the wealth of their knowledge and experience for the greater good of their brothers and the greater good of that Church to which they have dedicated themselves and their lives.

## **Membership**

Bishop Paul, *Episcopal Liaison*; Fr. John Jillions, *Chair*; Hieromonk Nikodhim (Preston), *Administrator*; Executive Committee: Fr. David Lowell; Fr. Dennis Rhodes; Fr. Gregory Safchuk; Fr. Nicholas Solak; Fr. Stephen Vernak; Fr. Kirill Sokolov; Mrs. Cindy Heise, LMSW.

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

To posit that the life of the Church and the life of the world would or should be distinct is mistaken. As Fr. Schmemmann did not hesitate to decry, such abstraction is only the addition of further fractioning to the seamless whole of God’s creation, determining in which and what windows of interaction we wish to have Him present, telling Him where He is wanted and, thereby, where He is not. Yet all is His.

The lives of the clergy of the Orthodox Church in America and their families are lives led in this world not as something distinct from their churchly commitments and obligations but as something that demonstrates for all the universal pairing of God with His people, His creation. With both feet planted in this single reality, they work to repair the intellectual rupture that seeks to divide, and by their service they do this. What we can do to support them in this, brings life to the Church, restores life to a world rightly aligned. The longer and healthier and more stable and more confident each priest’s ministry can be, the more will he be able to lead the faithful and the faithless back to this reality of God present with them in all things: life in the world recognized and therefore returned.

The Department of Pastoral Life only hopes to help with this, so that priests can have long careers, their families can stay secure and cared for, and their vocation of service exist strongly and far into the future.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Clergy Peer Groups:* In 2015, the department responded to a request from the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania to assist them in developing and obtaining funding for a program of clergy support and education. The HOPE (Honoring Orthodox Pastoral Excellence) Program is the result of this. Funded by the diocese with a matching grant from the Pastoral Excellence Network, a Lilly initiative housed at Christian Theological Seminary in Indiana, this program offers priests and priests' wives an opportunity to assemble five or more times each year with a group of four to eight of their peers and a trained facilitator. In these sessions, whose implementation varies widely and according to the particular needs of each group, the individuals are invited to share the challenges of their roles in a constructive and disciplined manner and this guided by a paid and prepared moderator. Participants have noted that these venues allow them to unburden themselves of some of those challenges they face in their vocations but to do so in such a way that that leads them to growth, benefitting from the empathy of those there gathered and the broadening of their perspective by assessments shared.

The significant assumption of this endeavor is that most clergy and clergy wives possess within themselves already the means to be and stay healthy, balanced, and productive despite the often challenging nature of their roles. Thus, these peer groups provide not a place to learn new things but to practice this health and stability, coming to terms with these in an environment of assured trust and common background.

In three years, five groups have been formed and meet regularly. With the generosity of His Eminence, Archbishop Mark, and of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, an invitation to participate in this program has been made to all proximate Orthodox clergy and their families. Participants span seven OCA dioceses and five Orthodox jurisdictions.

So successful has this program proven to be that there is now a need to make its benefits available to a broader spectrum of clergy. Clustered in the northeast of the United States for these past years, we are now in the process of drafting a sizeable grant to the Lilly Foundation directly which, if received, will enable training of facilitators, formation of groups, and logistical support much more broadly than was heretofore possible.

*Celibate Clergy:* At the request of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, a paper, "Discerning Celibacy", was drafted to explore the particular challenges that celibate clergy in the OCA face. Confining itself primarily to those priests who serve in active parish ministry, it noted both the strengths of this population, which comprises about 17% of the OCA's clergy, and those especial needs that they may have. Noteworthy among these findings are the deficits that currently exist to address points of transition at the loss of a spouse through death, separation, or divorce. This paper and several subsequent addenda were presented to the Holy Synod for review.

*Mutual Aid Fund:* A proposal to establish a clergy mutual aid fund was reviewed by the Synod, and plans are now in progress to make this a reality. This resource would be set in place to augment parish and diocesan monies for situations of extraordinary need in

the lives of clergy and clergy families. While each diocese of our Church with fortitude and generosity strives to respond to the unexpected within its presbyterate, still the extant resources are sometimes limited. Notably, medical bills, funeral costs, and unforeseen expenses for widows and widowers remain at times incompletely met. This fund, which will be managed by clergy and grounded particularly in donations from clergy, aims to offer support which acknowledges a vocation shared and problems borne together as brothers.

*Sexual Identity:* Responding to a directive from the Holy Synod, a paper examining current pastoral practices surrounding sexual identity was compiled. This document, "Oil to Troubled Waters", is the result of interviews conducted with OCA hierarchs, bringing these voices into dialogue with each other on this contentious but timely topic. It was submitted to the Synod for their review and utilization.

*Compensation:* After a review of clergy compensation policies published by dioceses of the OCA and after consideration of the great wealth of anecdotal accounts of these policies' implementation, the departmental committee has with great enthusiasm and excitement observed the Diocese of the West engage in a detailed, comprehensive, yet pastorally sensitive examination of its own clergy compensation practices. The process of obtaining these findings and some of the needs they then highlighted have been shared both with the Synod and at meetings of diocesan chancellors and treasurers, thereby providing a format and means for those dioceses so interested to pursue such inquiry of their own. While progress is being made, clergy compensation and the routine review of this remain pressingly inadequate in many parishes of the OCA, and this is a significant risk factor to the ongoing health and longevity of service for priests and their families.

*Clergy Guidelines:* Responding again to the wishes of the Holy Synod, a revision of the OCA's guidelines for clergy has commenced. Though still, at its core, an invaluable document for parish priests, the more than twenty years since its drafting have left it in need of renewal. Most especially, the bishops have commented that they would wish to have this perform a more pedagogical function so that it can be a resource both for clergy newly appointed to their positions and for those even experienced priests who encounter situations new to them. Leading this process of assessment and revision is Fr. Kirill Sokolov, who has long been trusted to train new deacons and guide late vocations throughout the OCA, who is the secretary of the OCA's Board of Theological Education, and, therefore, has deep insights into the may established practices ubiquitous throughout the Church.

*Clergy Wives Interviews:* Through electronic questionnaires, in-person conversations, and telephone interviews, Cindy Heise has been researching issues in the lives of clergy wives and their families. In this, she accesses a different set of voices than those more often asked or heard. Though this project is still in its adolescence, these other perspectives have proven invaluable, reinforcing concerns and suspicions voiced elsewhere, grounding and deepening these, while proffering topics and perspectives previously unknown. Among those things that those interviewed have raised as topics of foremost concern are clergy compensation, the interaction of individual clerics amidst the diocesan hierarchy of deans, chancellor, and hierarchs, adequate planning and interest in appropriate placement in assignment of clergy *and* their families to parishes, the intense isolation that often accompanies this life of ministry, and relationship of clergy wives and/or their children with parishioners, parish leaders, diocesan bishops, and the Church more generally. We are grateful for the trust of those with whom Cindy

has already spoken, and we look forward to cultivating an ongoing outreach to clergy wives so that they, too, may have a very rightful place in this dialogue on pastoral life.

*Demographic Projection:* As a tool for the hierarchs and also for our seminaries, a study of anticipated retirement of OCA clergy is now underway. This draws information from two sources: the OCA's database of clergy and each bishop's experience of his own diocesan parishes. Once completed, this will provide a projected evaluation of what pastoral needs may exist within each diocese and within the OCA as a whole given the statistically likely retirement dates of the priests therein. Thus, over the course of two years, five years, and ten years, we may see what numbers of additional priests must be trained, prepared, and assigned. With this information in hand, bishops will be better able to plan for the life and ongoing care of the faithful, the seminaries may note what levels of recruitment and education will be required to maintain the work of the Church, and the laity recognize the need to encourage and support future vocations. At the 2018 meeting of diocesan chancellors and treasurers, clergy shortages were reported as already affecting or soon to be affecting all dioceses.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

Because nearly all of the departmental programs already underway are ongoing and, in many cases, will continue to be for some time, and because the work of this department is inclined to be responsive to those needs identified by the Holy Synod and by the clergy of the Orthodox Church in America themselves, no concrete future additional initiatives have yet been specifically designated. Doubtless, there will be more projects, and there is assuredly more work to be done in what is even now at hand. However, since the revival of this department in 2015, a conscious choice has informed our labors: this department is not one of superior or external expertise; it is not the realm of the specialist. Rather, it remains committed to working alongside the already manifestly capable clergy of this Church, offering its resources to them, its time, attention, and organization. By this, we hope the good work that is already being done in parish and diocese may be sustained and augmented.

### **Conclusion**

Great thanks is due to all the members of the executive committee of this department without whose efforts so much less would here be offered. The care of these brothers and sister for the family of clergy and Church speaks well of them both as individuals and as members of that Church they serve. In this, they are not at all unlike those whom they represent, the clergy and clergy families working for the good of the OCA and for the good of this livened world.

## **H. Department of Youth and Young Adults**

### **Mandate**

A church-wide ministry providing a variety of worship, fellowship, educational and service opportunities to engage youth, young adults, and college students in the life of our Church.

Members of the Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry (YYACM) support the efforts of local parishes, communities and dioceses across North America to

nurture the spiritual growth and formation of our children, youth and college age students, helping them reach their full potential as Orthodox Christians.

## **Membership**

Bishop David, *Episcopal Liaison*; Fr. Christopher Rowe, *Acting Chair*; Fr. John Bacon, *Scouting*; Fr. Eric G. Tosi, *Scouting*; Dn. Alexander Cadman, *Representative to OCF Board of Directors*; Fr. Benjamin Tucci, *All American Council Coordinator*; Adam Rusinak, *Media/Digital Resource Team*; Rebecca Moll, *Media/Digital Resource Team*; Fr. Christopher Rowe, *Peter the Aleut Grant Committee*; Subdeacon Patrick (Jeremy) Pletnikoff, *Peter the Aleut Grant Committee*

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

This theme is lived out in many ways in youth formation and is the challenge before us. Fr. Alexander Schmemmann wrote:

“Man stands... both receiving the world from God and offering it to God – and by filling the world with this eucharist, he transforms his life, the one that receives from the world, into life in God, into communion with Him.”

Our focus in the department is to offer this path of transformation in all that we do – whether it be our social media presence, our camp directors conference or our blog postings. Our youth program here in St. Louis will explore this theme in many different ways. We will explore the Divine Liturgy, taking it apart to understand how we ‘give thanks’ throughout. We will challenge the youth to understand their role in our Liturgical worship. We will examine how God is calling us to live a ‘sacramental’ life, fostering a relationship with God by surrendering our will to Him. And lastly, how the Divine Liturgy is an expression of our love for the world – our love for all creation! We are excited to help bring the theme of this All-American Council to life through this week with our youth. We believe that this message of taking the life we have and transforming it into a life in communion with God is a critical point for not only our youth, but all of us.

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Department Overview:* I have been working in the department as a project team leader since the 16<sup>th</sup> AAC in Seattle. I have worked alongside our Youth Directors over that time. David Lucs (MW) was appointed Youth Director in mid-2017. Unfortunately, he was unable to continue in the position and in January 2018, he tendered his resignation. I have been coordinating the activities of the department since his departure.

The department has not had a full-time youth director since 2005 and as a result, is challenged to provide content and services to the Church on a consistent basis. Though our service is part-time and limited in capacity, there is an incredible team of people that are working to offer programming to the wider Church that is enlightening, useful, and supportive of the many good local efforts in youth ministry.

There has been a consistent focus to respond to the perceived needs of Orthodox youth in America in creative and cost-effective ways that aren’t prescriptive or “top-down” but are supportive of existing local ministries and/or engaging of individuals. When evaluating our existing offerings or contemplating new ones, we generally focus on these criteria:

1. Is it cost-effective? (can we do it for little or no money)
2. Is it meeting an expressed or perceived need?
3. Are we competing with other Orthodox jurisdictions or our own local ministries? Is it being done better already by someone else?
4. Is this a vehicle for our youth and young adult to participate in the greater life of the Church and in ministry?

In general, our programs are aimed at the following areas:

1. Inward-focused support (i.e. partnering with local parishes, dioceses, deaneries, etc.)
2. Outward-focused partnerships (Assembly of Bishops, Other Jurisdictions and Other Christians Groups/Forums)
3. Engaging digital content (our Social media, video projects, etc.)

*Inward-Focused Support (Building up the Life of our Church):*

*Peter the Aleut Grant Program:* Some years ago there was a substantial bequest made to the Department. This bequest was invested and a certain amount is set aside each year to be spent via this grant program. This grant is currently supervised by myself and Subdeacon Patrick (Jeremy) Pletnikoff (Diocese of Alaska, Metropolitan Council Finance Committee) This grant is intended to be as broad as possible and can be used for:

1. Youth/Young Adults wanting to attend qualifying retreats/educational programs, conferences, pilgrimages, events and workshops.
2. Clergy and lay leaders seeking continuing education in Youth Ministry.
3. Youth/Young Adults traveling to discern a calling at an OCA Seminary or Monastery.

Some examples include covering part of the cost to attend OCF college conferences and helping with fees associated with the Orthodox Young Professionals Conference.

A great deal of the available grant funds available for 2018 were used to help fund (primarily) clergy youth attend the AAC Youth Program here in St. Louis. Jeremy and I will be reviewing the application and award process for 2019. We will announce any changes to the program in the fall of 2018.

*All-American Council:* This Department has been charged by the Holy Synod to reignite the Youth/Young Adult component of our All-American Councils which hopefully is an objective realized here in St. Louis. The bulk of this work has been under the capable guidance of Fr. Benjamin Tucci, himself a veteran of the department, a leader at several past AAC youth programs, and in charge of youth ministry at our Minneapolis Cathedral. There is a clear need in the Church for more regional and national in person events for our youth that build relationships and identity as members of something bigger than just

their local parishes. This will be a focus of the department while working with our partners in the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) to make this a reality. Our Youth Program here in St. Louis includes a large number of young people from Alaska. The cost of travel from Alaska is sizable and through a generous gift, we were able to help defray some of their expenses. We see this as an investment into the future of the Church. As more and more of our youth make personal connections and then maintain these connections through in person and virtual events, the cohesive fabric and culture of our Orthodox community will be enhanced for years to come. Fr. Ben and his team of volunteers are to be commended for their hard work and commitment to providing our young people an excellent experience.

*I Am Orthodox website:* There is currently a great deal of youth-oriented material on the Youth and Young Adult page that is hosted on the OCA website. Our hope is that a new stand-alone **YYACM Website** designed for youth and young adults ages 10-25 will better address the needs of our target audience. This website is still in development. A logo and brand has been created for it – and Mike Varian (Diocese of the Midwest) has been leading plans to build the site. Content is now being developed to complete and launch the site.

As a review, the site will begin with three main components:

1. **Today in Orthodoxy** – a calendar of feasts, saints, historical events, daily scripture readings and curated social media postings which use the hashtag #iamorthodox
2. **Reflections** – content from the former **wonder blog** along with new articles and reflections curated by our content team.
3. **Perspectives** – a series of thematic videos and articles produced on a seasonal basis in a mini-series format. Possible topics include: sacraments, North American saints, etc.

The **Wonder Blog** from the existing YYA page will be absorbed into the new **I Am Orthodox** website, and renamed “Reflections” according to the proposal from Mike Varian outlined below.

Rebekah Moll (Diocese of the Midwest) is helping write content for the department social media outreach. Adam Rusinak (Diocese of the Midwest) is managing content as well as helping review, edit and post the articles to the blog.

*Camping Programs:* Our camping programs remain strong and locally run (parish, deanery or diocesan-level). What has been encouraging in recent years has been the strengthening of some of our more historic programs and the addition of winter camps and winter retreats to supplement our camping programs. The number and quality of our “Vacation Bible Schools” is growing and maturing, and they are taking advantage of many of the facilities of our more established parishes. Additionally, many of these programs are multi-jurisdictional sharing resources, people and facilities, in local communities. These programs represent in many places a strong point of locally-based ministry to our youth, to better connect them to the Church and to each other.

*Ongoing Point of Contact:* Something that is harder to quantify and report on is how our youth directors act as a resource to the Church. The Youth Directors since Atlanta

(Andrew Boyd and David Lucs) have received many phone calls and emails from all over the Church asking for advice or looking for resources in the field of youth and young adult ministry. These range from organizing training sessions at our seminaries, pointing out discussion resources for our clergy and lay leaders, to assisting in webinars and accepting invitations to speak at or visit campus ministry and young adult groups. Please reach out if you need help, that's why we are here.

### *Outward Focused Partnerships*

*Assembly of Orthodox Bishops Youth Committee:* The youth directors of the various jurisdictions meet via conference call or in person about once a quarter. I serve as the OCA's representative to this body. I have also served as the secretary of the group for several years. There is an atmosphere of support, mutual respect, and the desire to come together to build up a truly unified vision of youth ministry on this continent. The committee hosts a yearly conference (in late January) for youth and camp workers, which will be hosted by the OCA in 2020. The group collaborates with the GOA Youth Department on regional pan-Orthodox day-long Be the Bee retreats. We have also established a committee to formulate a common theological framework and approach for youth ministry and youth formation. We host several interactive web-based meetings each year on various topics relating to youth development and leadership.

*Orthodox College Fellowship:* OCF is a growing a vibrant ministry in America with over 300 chapters on University and College campuses across the country. We are engaged with OCF and provide major support. Apart from the dozens and dozens of OCA priests and lay-people who support OCF through financial support, leading local chapters, volunteering to support their programs, and welcoming in students, we also support OCF at the national level in a more tangible way. We are represented officially on their board by Deacon Alexander Cadman, who is also the OCF chaplain at Penn State. He contributes in many ways directly to the work of OCF nationally. Deacon Alex has stepped in to help provide administrative help while the OCF is going through a search for their next Executive Director. He is providing regular support to the full-time staff as well as partnering with other board members to provide needed leadership. We are also funding OCF directly from our budget in the amount of \$12,000 per year. We've been able to give scholarships to every OCA attendee at both college conferences for the past several years. OCF can often point to the OCA as one of its most generous and stable partners.

*Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America:* FOCA has traditionally been a generous and helpful partner and that relationship has continued. Our youth director has attended past national conventions to see the work of FOCA in person. I've also been glad of the partnership of Marge Kovach, their president, who is always supportive of our work and ready to collaborate on any level.

*Scouting/Eastern Orthodox Christian Scouting:* We continue to be represented in the scouting ministries by Frs. John Bacon and Eric Tosi. Fr. Eric often represents us at the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting meetings. He is often also a chaplain at large national and international Boy Scout gatherings and has been involved in Scouting for over 40 years. Fr John Bacon has been working with the Boy Scouts for over 35 years and continues to be an excellent resource to our whole church for those wanting to explore how their Orthodox faith can be coupled with scouting.



*Youth Equipped to Serve (YES):* The program of FOCUS North America that guides youth in a service experience to those in need, I've been glad to see many more OCA parishes becoming involved with it. It is a stellar program that is pan-Orthodox in nature and has been life-changing for many who have participated in it.

*Digital Initiatives:* One of the imperatives given to this department after the 16<sup>th</sup> All-American Council in Seattle and the OCA's Strategic Plan was to reach out to our Youth via social media. We maintain Orthodox content on the following social media platforms:

1. [www.facebook.com/yyaoca](http://www.facebook.com/yyaoca) Our Facebook page, updated regularly with lives of saints, photos from OCA parish/youth groups, liturgical texts, articles for discussion, etc. We now have over 2900 people following the page with many interacting with us regularly.
2. <https://www.youtube.com/user/ocayouth> Our YouTube channel which houses some of our video projects including our social media promotional video.
3. <https://twitter.com/ocayouth> Since many from our key demographic are moving away from Facebook as their primary social media tool, we also provide content to our Twitter feed. We post links and content across all platforms.
4. <https://www.instagram.com/ocayouth> We have added a presence on the Instagram platform. This a great site for posting our graphically intense information, like the **Words for Christian Living** series.

The first video of the **Lives of the North American Saints** series is nearing completion. The video, exploring the life of St. Tikhon of Moscow, is being developed by Luke Popadics and Masha Khoruzhik (Diocese of New York/New Jersey). They have created all the graphics and animation. Our goal is to publish the video by the time of the All-American Council.

Ideally, future videos could be created with Luke and Masha's help – creating a series of educational and informative videos about our North American saints.

*Existing OCA YYACM Web Content:* The most popular being is in the form of two magazines: **On the Upbeat** and **Young Life**. Evergreen content from past issues of Upbeat in the mid-1980s has been scanned as readable text, and is ready for editing, formatting, and placement into new resources from the Department.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

1. *Service Trips:* There are numerous opportunities for youth to serve. Orthodox Christian Mission Center is collaborating with our seminaries, OCF and Project Mexico to offer our youth opportunities to serve and learn. I highly encourage anyone with any kind of interest to take advantage of these opportunities. These trips are life-changing!
2. *Pilgrimages:* We hope to invite our youth to participate in youth pilgrimages internationally. We have a rich history of this, but there have been few opportunities over the past years. I hope to be able to participate in more of these moving forward.

3. *Youth Rally*: Our hope is that we can provide a youth jamboree type event in the near future. This will likely be completed in conjunction with FOCA.
4. *Young Professionals Gathering*: There has been a great deal of interest in gathering our young adults – both older college age and young professionals – together to allow them to network and learn. We envision presentations to be centering around themes of exploration, discovery and service. Our young adults will be able to see that there are many ways to serve our Lord and His faithful in many places in this country and internationally before beginning a career or while starting out in a secular career.

## **Conclusion**

There is not a “full-time” youth director in the OCA. This was something brought up both in the OCA’s Strategic Plan and at recent All-American Councils. There may not be interest in adding another full-time staff member to our central administration. But we also need to acknowledge that there is plenty of work to be done and, in truth, more than enough for a full-time position. My hope is that the Church will prayerfully consider the option of adding a full-time youth position to our central administration. I encourage you to also consider a full search for the most ideal candidate and that we consider creative ways of funding the position so that it does not rely on our already stretched-thin budget for its support. This essential ministry must be creatively funded, appropriated, and executed. The funding must be guaranteed for a minimum of three years. Assuring the best candidate to fill this role will require a commitment to him or her for a minimum number of years.

In our current position with part-time leadership, the Department is challenged by a lack of human resources. Ideally, we need to knit together a team of youth workers and leaders from across the Church to do the critical work of youth formation. If possible, we would have diocesan representatives willing to collaborate and network, work on shared projects, helping to eliminate duplicate efforts, and partnering on key initiatives. This message has been shared with the Metropolitan Council as well as the Holy Synod. I am still hopeful that this will become a reality in the near future.

In summary, I’d like to share something Fr. Eric Tosi wrote for our Wonder blog in 2013:

“(T)he Church is our source of consistency, meaning, community, peace and hope. The Church needs to be the center of our lives so that we can find our own center in the midst of new manifestations of chaos and confusion. It is the place where we can meet other Orthodox Christian youth and establish life-long relationships with them, sharing in our common faith. It is, in short, the place where we discover God and His love for one and all — the Kingdom of God yet to be fully revealed, but already fully present in its worship and fellowship.”

This was written five years ago but couldn’t be more true today. Our youth face the chaos and sin of this world every day. They face emotional pain and anxiety in so many places. The peace and fulfillment offered through the discovery of God in all His Love is healing and the only way out of the confusion of the secular world. I commend the efforts of our dioceses to help our youth understand this. There are so many good things happening; please take advantage of these opportunities. The relationships that our youth will form here in St. Louis and at Orthodox youth gatherings will be with them

for their entire lives. We live in community and we will hopefully be saved by sharing in the community of our Lord through the Eucharist. It's the only way!

This is submitted in deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve our Lord and our youth. I am always amazed by the energy, love and commitment our youth volunteers have for the young people in our Church. Our youth workers and our youth share a bond of love that is beautiful and transforming.

## **I. Office of Institutional Chaplains**

### **Mandate**

The Office of Institutional Chaplaincy supports the ministry of full and part-time hospital, hospice, long-term care, prison, fire, police chaplains, and those in other settings.

The Orthodox Church in America is a member of the Commission for Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS Network) and endorses chaplains to serve in specific institutional settings and toward certification with the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), and the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP).

His Beatitude, Metropolitan TIKHON is the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Endorser for OCA clergy and laypersons who are clinically trained and serving as institutional chaplains; this office initiates recommendations for endorsement.

Archpriest Steven Voytovich serves as the Office's Director, supporting the formal endorsement process for institutional chaplains and facilitating dialogue among those ministering in a variety of institutional settings.

Institutional Chaplaincy has formally functioned since 2003, and was identified as department in 2006, to formally endorse those engaged in ministry in specialized settings such as hospitals, hospices, long-term care, correctional, emergency response, and other settings. This office remains within budgeted funding parameters.

Clergy and qualified laypersons need this formal endorsement to accept employment positions, and to be certified as chaplains. Like military chaplains, institutional chaplains receive their endorsement from the Office of the Metropolitan. As we are a formal endorser, this Office Chair represents our Orthodox Church in America in an endorsing capacity, as well as attending credentialing body meetings. At the writing of this report we are no longer the only jurisdiction with a formal endorsement process, and a further question lies ahead in terms of any role the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops may have in the future where endorsement is concerned.

### **Membership**

Fr. Steven Voytovich, *Chair*; Fr. Paul Fetsko; Fr. Michael Medis; Fr. Timothy Hasenecz; Anna Nikitina; Brett McKety; Resources: Fr. Theodore Boback; Fr. Sergei Bouteneff

Website: [www.orthinc.org](http://www.orthinc.org)

### **Reflection on the Theme "For the Life of the World"**

This department's very function continues to be directly related to this Council's theme: *"For the Life of the World"* of the Orthodox Church. The ministry contexts where our chaplains serve are in what we can call the greater community context beyond that of the local parish, so our chaplains are witnesses to the Orthodox Faith in the greater community. And in like manner, that we are now represented in interfaith settings, endorsing, and pastoral care tables representing diverse religious traditions, the Orthodox Faith has played a more active role in shaping this ministry. This is something our OCA can surely celebrate as we together reflect on this important theme.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

1. Fr. Steven continues to represent the OCA before the Commission on Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS Network) and the Association of Religious Endorsing Bodies (AREB).
2. Our department collaborates with another jurisdiction (GOA) concerning formal endorsement processes.
3. The OCA became a faith tradition member of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), May 2013.
4. Bring the good training and background connected to chaplaincy arena to our clergy, such as Self-Care Program offered at the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

1. To continue building our endorsement practices in conjunction with best practice models and in keeping with our unique Orthodox ecclesiastical frame.
2. To begin framing out a handbook related to the functioning of institutional chaplains
3. Prepare new leadership to continue advancing the work of the department.
4. Continue collaborating with OCA Departments such as Compassion in Action with CSHA, and in offering continuing education in concert with the new department bearing this name.
5. This Office stands ready to be an active participant in the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in shaping next steps with respect to chaplaincy, now reflecting over ten years of real experience and development.

### **Conclusion**

One of the present challenges before this office is made real by the advent of credentialing bodies that do not conform to existing standards of theological education, or relationships with faith traditions. This means that persons can now be credentialed who may have one or even neither of the above. This means that we as the Orthodox Church in America will now need to take a more active role in articulating what have been standards for credentialing to our candidates for credentialing: an M.Div. degree or equivalent, endorsement through this office, and four units of recognized clinical

training. The best way for us to proceed is to in fact develop a handbook for our institutional chaplains, and to hold our institutional chaplains to these standards.

In reflecting on the theme of ministry “for the life of the world” of the Orthodox Church in America, it is exciting to identify and even celebrate institutional chaplaincy as a real example of what this expansion was intended to be as we prepare to celebrate 50 years of our autocephaly. The American pastoral care and counseling movement really came into its own in the 1920’s while our church was in turmoil, and now as that movement prepares to celebrate its centennial, the Orthodox Church in America is a leading formal and active presence in this movement both here and abroad. Our very meaningful and rich Orthodox pastoral heritage is making a difference in a variety of institutional settings through our chaplains serving in them, and through the work of this office our OCA is an active participant as the greater pastoral care and counseling movement itself faces challenges in our rapidly changing American context. Thanks be to God for the dedication of the members of this office who continue to bear witness to our historical faith in their daily ministry, and to our church leadership that has had the foresight and wisdom to bless the developmental work that has been accomplished. May God continue to bless the work of this office: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Eph. 4:12)

## **J. Office of Military Chaplains**

### **Mandate**

The Office of the OCA Military and VA Chaplaincies oversees the requirements of the Military and VA Chaplaincies in regards to the Armed Forces Chaplains Board, the branch Chiefs of Chaplains and the VAMC National Chaplain and staff. The Office actively participates in the various annual meetings of the National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces, the Endorsers Conference of Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy, and the Armed Forces Chaplains Board meeting with the Chiefs of Chaplains. The Office provides support to the active duty, reserve component and national guard chaplains and the part time, full time, fee based VAMC Chaplains. The office reviews the requests for ecclesiastical endorsement, discusses with the appropriate Diocesan Hierarch and discusses the final recommendation with Metropolitan Tikhon who is the endorser for the Orthodox Church in America.

*Vision:* The Orthodox Military Chaplain is an Orthodox Priest in uniform serving in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. The Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplain serves in the Department of Veterans Affairs in a medical center. They are active members of the respective chaplaincy and share a common core of professional responsibilities for worship services, personal counseling, administrative duties, pastoral visitations, cultural activities, humanitarian projects, moral leadership, and appropriate collateral duty assignments.

They in addition to fulfilling the disciplines, dogmas, doctrines of faith and other canonical directives required of all Orthodox Priests, comply with the administrative requirements of their Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agency.

They exercise their priestly mission in three ways: to those of the Orthodox Faith, to those of other faiths, and to those who have no religious affiliation.

*Mission:* The mission of the OCA's military chaplain is the propagation of the Orthodox Faith; to serve, worship, and love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and to bring spiritual nourishment and enlightenment to thousands of Orthodox military personnel and their families serving their country throughout the world.

The mission of the Veterans Affairs (VA) Chaplains is to counsel and to bring spiritual nourishment through the Holy Sacraments to hundreds of Orthodox veterans in VA Medical Centers throughout the United States of America.

*Operation:* The Office of Military (VAMC) Chaplaincies currently operates directly under the supervision of the Metropolitan and forms a unique deanery of the Church. According to the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America (Article XI section 4 a. and 4b.), the Dean of Orthodox Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains is appointed by and directly responsible to the Metropolitan.

The Executive Director and Dean of Chaplains is the chief administrator for the Metropolitan in all matters concerning the OCA chaplains in the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and the Veterans Administration. The Executive Director/Dean is the representative of the Metropolitan to the National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC). The Assistant Executive Director works together with the Executive Director.

The Executive Director/Dean and the Assistant Executive Director recruit and screen candidates for the chaplaincy, prepare ecclesiastical endorsement for the Metropolitan and maintain contact with all Orthodox chaplains and with the Executive Director of the Armed Services Chaplains Board, Military Chief of Chaplains and the VA National Staff Chaplain and chaplain staff. They do this through telecommunications, email, correspondence, and by participating in various meetings and site visitations throughout the world. The Executive Director/Dean provides guidance to chaplains serving throughout the world on spiritual matters and ensures that Orthodox personnel, regardless of where they are stationed can freely exercise their religious beliefs. The Executive Director/Dean attends all conferences and executive board committee meetings of the NCMAF and ECVAC.

The Military chaplains from the Orthodox Church in America serve in the United States Armed Forces in the United States, Germany, Korea, Japan, and the Middle East. The Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplains serve within the United States at VA Hospitals.

## **Membership**

Metropolitan Tikhon, *Ecclesiastical Endorser*; Bishop Daniel, *Episcopal Liaison*; Archbishop Nikon, *Liaison to Assembly of Bishops*; Fr. Theodore Boback, Jr., *Dean/Executive Director OCA Military and VA Chaplaincy*; Fr. Joseph J. Gallick, *Assistant Dean/Deputy Director OCA Military and VA Chaplaincy*

## **Reflection on the Theme "For the Life of the World"**

The Orthodox Military Chaplain perform a full cycle of liturgical services including Vespers, Matins, Divine Liturgy, Feast Days, and services during Advent, Great Lent, the Dormition and Apostles Fasts, Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts and administering the Sacraments of the Church. Our Orthodox Priests have been deployed in support of the

Global War on Terror. Our priests provided worship Services during holy Week and Pascha in tandem with other Orthodox Chaplains from other branches of the services. Others have served with coalition forces for example from Estonia, Georgia, and Romania and others have mentored and have served with the first Orthodox Chaplain in the Canadian Forces since WWI. Others have advised on various issues and concerns such as those who served with the Coast Guard in Alaska where they advised on coastal Alaskan communities which are indigenously Orthodox.

Included among the continued Ministry Concern of our chaplain are:

1. Spiritual Renewal, Ministry of Present, Readiness, Interfaith and Ecumenical Ministries Programs, outreach programs, service on various boards such as family action; biomedical ethics, advisory councils.
2. "For no greater love is there – than to give one's life for a friend." (John 13:15). As the Orthodox Military and VAMC Chaplain journeys in his ministry, he shares unconditionally in the life of the service member/veteran. His faith, trust, and hope operate through love. He has love of God and those to whom he ministers. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ is the example for the Chaplain in serving. The chaplain is dedicated and is an example of love to others and he has respect and care for all entrusted to him. The chaplain brings God to the "service member and the service member to God" and they "nurture the living, care for the wounded and honor the fallen." – for the life of the world.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

The Office successfully recruited chaplains for service in the US Armed Forces and the Veterans Affairs Medical Centers.

1. Archbishop Daniel made Archpastoral visit to Lackland Air Force Base.
2. The office, provided updates to Archbishop Nikon, the OCA Hierarchy member on the committee for military chaplaincy of the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of North America.
3. The office, in January of each year, participates in the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF), the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC) and the Armed Forces Chaplains Board which is the Chiefs of Chaplains from each branch of service.
4. Completion of protocols and of the re issuance of the OCA Military Chaplain Cross.
5. The office provided updates to Metropolitan Tikhon, Fr Eric Tosi, and Fr. John Jillions.
6. Fr. Theodore Boback was elected to serve on the executive board of the NCMAF and serves also on the executive board of ECVAC Committee.
7. The office submits a written report to the Holy Synod of Bishops and Metropolitan Council twice a year.

8. Prepared ecclesiastical forms for submission by the Metropolitan to the various agencies.
9. Met with some of the members of COMISS while attending the NCMAF/ECVAC Conferences in Washington, DC
10. Received invitation and participated in the annual Memorial Day Service for deceased veterans at Saint Tikhon Monastery.
11. Continued work on the Memorial Shrine for Veterans and Chaplaincy.
12. Worked with (partnered) FOCA in supporting the military chaplaincy program through providing various religious materials through their gifts of love program.
13. Worked with Churches which wanted to do an outreach program.
14. Communications with chaplain candidate, chaplains (Armed Forces and VAMC)
15. Provide annual report to the Armed Forces Chaplains Board
16. Communications with the recruiters from the various branches of service
17. Communication with the VAMC Chief of Chaplain Office and Personnel Office.
18. In particular:

*Endorser's Conferences:* The annual National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF), the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC) and the Armed Forces Chaplains Board with the three branches Chief of Chaplains is conducted annually in the month of January. The OCA Office of Military and VA Chaplaincy is also a member of the Commission on Ministry in Specialized Settings (COMISS) which is in session prior to the NCMAF and ECVAC Meetings. Both the Military and Institutional Chaplaincy have a delegate representative for the COMISS, Very Reverend Steven Voytovich, Director of the OCA Institutional Chaplaincy Office attends the COMISS meetings.

Some highlight of the past conference were presentations: National Veterans Affairs Chaplain presentation, Chaplain McCoy; Confident pluralism with Dr. John Inazu, Pluralism and persuasion with Ms. Cherie Harder; religious liberty update with Daniel Bloomberg; Grappling with the complexity of Religious identity with Benjamin Marcus; Emerging issues from the Armed Force Chaplains Board; Moral Injury; and business sessions.

*Military Chaplains Association Institute and Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplains Conferences:* The Military Chaplaincy Association (MCA) is held on an annual basis and the most recent conference was held in October 2017 at Newport New, VA. The training sessions were held in conjunction



with presentations by the VA Chief of Chaplains Office. Some highlights of past MCA workshops included the following presentations: VA Chaplaincy – ministry to veterans; Clinical Pastoral Education not just hospitals anymore; the professional military chaplain; civil air patrol chaplaincy – emerging response; the VA Chaplaincy and suicide prevention; why religion matters; safe and sacred spaces; and Evidence Based – Person Centered Chaplain Care – results of spiritual performance based survey. Chaplain and behavioral health counseling – report of the VA Study will be presented by Chaplain Keith Ethridge of the VA National Chaplain Center and Past VA Chief of Chaplains. Chaplain (BG) Kenneth “Ed” Brandt, Senior Army National Guard Chaplain and US Army Deputy Chief of Chaplains, Guard was a keynote speaker. There also is a business session and a welcome reception.

*Military Chaplain Cross:* The Military Chaplain Cross protocols have been written and the re issuance of the Cross has been approved. Thanks to Bishop Daniel, Episcopal Liaison to the Office and Fr. Eric Tosi for their assistance and support of the project.

*Chaplaincy Kits:* Since providing Liturgical items to the first United States Armed Forces Orthodox Military Chaplain (Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky), the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) has supported the Chaplaincy in various ways. The FOCA had a “Gifts of Love” Project for collecting monies for the buying of religious materials and articles to give to our chaplains for service members and veterans. The FOCA had also conducted such projects several years ago. Remaining packets with other religious materials will be distributed to the chaplains this summer.

19. *Military and VA Chaplain Personnel Strength:*

Personnel Statistics have changed through the years and it continues to change based on requirements of the United States Armed Forces and the Veterans Affairs Medical Centers in fulfilling their respective missions.

*Promotions:* Fr. Stephen Duesenberry was selected to promotion in the United States Navy to the rank of (O-6) CAPTAIN and Fr. Peter Dubinin was selected for promotion in the United States Army to the rank of (O-6) COLONEL. Fr. Peter returned recently from his assignment in the Middle East. We pray that God grant His Grace and Blessings upon each of them and their families. Many Years!

*Retirements:*

- b. Military: Fr. Eugene Wozniak retired from the United States Navy. Fr. Eugene is now the rector of at Saint Matthew Church, Green Bay, Wisconsin. His dedication and devotion to pastoral ministry to the service members and families was outstanding and resulted in the spiritual nourishment and enrichment for those served. May God grant His Choicest Blessings to Fr. Eugene and family. Many Years!
- c. VAMC: Fr. Michael Westerberg retired from the VAMC in December 015. Fr. Sergei C. Bouteneff, who had 33 years of Federal Service of

which he served as Chief of the Chaplains Service at the VAMC in Connecticut prior to retirement, retired 31 May 2018. Their dedicated ministry to our veterans and staff was outstanding resulting in spiritual nourishment to all whom they ministered. May God grant His Choicest Blessings to each of them and their family. Many Years!

*Memory Eternal:* Fr. Michael Margitich, United States Air Force Chaplain retired fell asleep in the Lord. and Fr, John Klembara, Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplain, retired, fell asleep in the Lord. May God grant them rest eternal in His Heavenly Kingdom, Memory Eternal!

20. *Current Orthodox Church in America Military Personnel Strength.*

a. *Active Duty:*

**United States Air Force:**

- Fr. Eugene Lahue, Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Texas
- Father Thaddeus Werner Chaplain Captain USAF Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, Alaska
- Fr. Timothy Yates, Chaplain, USAF, Joint Base Lackland, San Antonio, TX

**United States Army**

- Fr. George Hill, Chaplain (MAJ), USA JAG School
- Fr. Sean Levine, Chaplain (MAJ), USA Fort Belvoir, VA (Family Life Chaplain)
- Fr. George Oanca, Chaplain (CPT), Fort Leonard Wood, MO

**United States Navy**

- Fr. Stephen Duesenberry CDR-P CHC USN Camp Lejeune, NC

b. *Reserve Component*

**United States Air Force**

- Fr. Oliver Herbel Chaplain, Captain, USAFR
- Fr. Gregory Bruner, Chaplain, Captain, INARNG

**United States Army**

- Fr. Peter Dubinin, Chaplain (COL) USAR
- Fr. Matthew Fuhrman, Chaplain (1LT) USAR
- Fr. Danut Palanceau Chaplain (CPT) USAR

- Fr. James Parnell, Chaplain (CPT) CTARNG
- Fr. James Sizemore Chaplain (MAJ) OHARNG

### **United State Navy**

- Fr. Herman Kincaid, LT, CHC, USNR

#### *c. Retired Military and VAMC Chaplains*

There are over 30 retired Orthodox Military Priests from the United States Armed Forces with many of them serving within the OCA in various ministries. There are two OCA retired VAMC Chaplain. The retired chaplains have a range of special skills and are an additional asset within our Orthodox Church.

#### *d. Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplains*

Father Joseph Martin, VAMC, Wilkes-Barre, PA, continues to serve as the Chief of Chaplain Service at his respective VAMC. Father Philip Reese serves as a full time position at the Miami VAMC. Both are full time positions. We are grateful to all the VAMC Chaplains for their continued ministry to our veterans.

VA Chaplains might attend training that equips them to perform specific tasks and or to fill certain positions such as Post Traumatic Stress, palliative care, substance abuse; etc.

Seven OCA Priests serve our VAMCs

- Fr. Sergei C. Bouteneff - Newington, CT - retired MAY 2018
- Fr. Igor Burdikoff – Albany, NY - Intermittent
- Fr. Daniel Degyansky – Manhattan, NY - Part Time
- Fr. Joseph Martin – Wilkes-Barre, PA - Chief of Chaplain at local hospital
- Fr. James Parnell – New Haven, CT - Part Time
- Fr. Philip Reese, Miami, FL - Full Time
- Fr. Paul Suda – Pittsburgh, PA - Part Time
- Fr. George York, Pittsburgh, PA – Intermittent

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

1. Ensure that the Orthodox Tradition is upheld in a pluralistic environment.

2. Participate on the committee for military chaplaincy of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North America through direct (as a member and consultant on the commission) and indirect (Archbishop Nikon who serves as a member on the committee).
3. Continue to update Metropolitan Tikhon, Ecclesiastical Endorser; Bishop Daniel, OCA Episcopal liaison to the Office of the Military and VAMC Chaplaincies; the OCA Chancellor (Fr. Jillions), the OCA Secretary (Fr. Tosi) and the OCA Episcopal Assembly Hierarch liaison on military committee of the Episcopal Assembly (Archbishop Nikon) as needed and as required.
4. Provide materials for parish clergy and faithful about the deployment cycles, the spiritual and emotional challenges, helping caring for the caregiver.
5. Conduct an OCA Military Chaplain Conference and an OCA VAMC Chaplain Conference in 2020.
6. Conduct a second Joint Conference of OCA Military, OCA VAMC and OCA Institutional Chaplains.
7. Develop a data base of training qualifications of the Orthodox Military and VAMC Chaplains and provide a link of this information to the various departments and offices as the need for certain skills and resources are identified and needed or required.
8. Ensure that Orthodoxy is not dismissed as a religious body within the Department of Defense, Department of the VA, US Armed Force Chaplains Board as well as the various support organizations; such as, NCMAF and ECVAC.
9. Maintain our role and Orthodox Voice in NCMAF and ECVAC.
10. Recruit Orthodox Priests for active, reserve component and National Guard military chaplaincy and VA Chaplaincy.
11. Update strategic plan for the OCA military and VA Chaplaincy.
12. Continue to work on memorial shrine for veterans and chaplains.
13. Diocesan recruitment plan for military chaplains.
14. Visit seminaries and expand the chaplain candidate program.
15. Continue to encourage chaplains to submit articles and photographs for the TOC, Diocesan newspapers, OCA web page (thanks to Fr. John Matusiak for his support of the military and VAMC Chaplaincy articles and updates); etc.
16. Continued partnership with the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) and other such organizations.

17. Continued partnership with churches who desire to do outreach programs for our chaplains, veterans, and service members.
18. Ensure that the office of military and VA Chaplaincy budget is submitted annually and that an increase in budget for visitation of Orthodox Military and VAMC communities.

## **Conclusion**

The Office of Military and VA Chaplaincies continues to be an active member and participant in the National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and the Endorser Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC) and COMISS. The Orthodox Church in America is recognized by each of these organizations and the Military Chief of Chaplains and the VA National Chaplain Center as the endorser for OCA priests. To be considered for the military or veterans affairs medical center chaplaincy, a candidate must first have his Diocesan Bishop's Blessing, then an ecclesiastical endorsement from the Metropolitan, which is prepared by the Dean/Director, Office of the OCA Chaplaincies as well as the candidate must meet the requirements of the United States Armed Forces or the Veterans Affairs Medical Center National Chaplain Office. If you are interested in serving, please contact the OCA's Office of the Military and VA Chaplaincies.

Thanks to all who supported the Office of the Chaplaincies, to Fr. Joseph Gallick, the Deputy Director, to our active duty, reserve component, national guard, VAMC and retired chaplains and various members of the office, to the Chancery Staff for their consultation on various concerns and various items. We express our gratitude to all who worked and consulted in various ways. Thanks to Metropolitan Tikhon for his archpastoral support and guidance. We especially express our gratitude to the Hierarchs of the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops who give their blessings in support of the priests to be endorsed by the Metropolitan to serve as chaplains in our US Armed Forces and the VAMC and for their prayers.

This year our OCA Chaplaincy celebrates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Orthodox Priest serving as a chaplain in the United States Armed Forces. Since the first Orthodox Priests to serve as a chaplain in North America, Protopresbyter John Osvanitsky with the Canadian Armed Forces during WWI, and the first US Armed Forces Orthodox Priests (in 1943, Archpriest Vladimir Borichevsky, Army; Archpriest Michael Kovach, Army; and Archpriest John Kivko, Army) and Fr. Alexander Seniavsky, who entered into the US Navy October 1944, Later, Fr. Basil Stroyen, Fr Nicholas Kiryluk and Fr Michael Margitich in the United States Air Force, through to our current chaplains who are listed in this report and who serve today, the mission of our chaplain continue. Whether in peace time or war time, during the WWII, Korea, Vietnam, "Cold War", Afghanistan, Iraq, Middle East, Bosnia, Balkans, or other conflicts our priests volunteer to serve our Church our nation in a viable and dynamic ministry to the men and women in the United States Armed Force, authorized civilians, families and sometime coalition forces. Among the first VAMC Chaplains was Archpriest Eugene Pianovich, who was the first Orthodox Priest to serve in the VAMC in Wilkes-Barre, PA followed by the late Archpriest George Pawlush, then Archpriest Claude Vinyard and currently Fr. Joseph Martin together with our current VAMC chaplains who are listed in this report. Our priests in the VAMC Chaplaincy ensure the seamless transition of the requisite ministry

from the military to the VA health care system. Remember our chaplains and families in your prayers.

Many changes have occurred during this century and in recent months. These changes impact upon the pastoral skills required today of our chaplains. We need to ensure the continued Orthodox leadership role in all forms of chaplaincy are provided and are performed. Our office and the chaplains need to continue on the journey before us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so that as we go forth with faith, hope, and love in all aspects of ministry and of our endeavors for the Life of the World, for the Glory of God and our Church.

## **K. Pension Board**

### **Mandate**

The Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan (the “Plan”) was established in 1976. The administrative management of the Plan is assigned to the Pension Board. The assets of the Plan are held in the Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan Trust (“Trust”).

The mission of the Pension Board is to provide a dependable retirement vehicle for OCA Clergy and Lay Staff.

The Board and consultants hold regular quarterly meetings and collaborate with intermittent conference calls and special meetings as needed. The Board has met at least sixteen times since the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC in July 2015 for both regular and special meetings.

OCA Pension Board Trustees, jointly with key professional investment, legal, actuarial, accounting and auditing providers and the Plan Administrator regularly evaluate Plan provisions and capabilities, with a goal of providing the best benefits possible based upon the expected contributions and earnings.

The OCA Pension Plan is a non-ERISA pension plan that complies with United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations to meet the requirements for favorable tax status as a “qualified” pension plan. The Pension Board seeks to uphold the parameters of the Plan as defined by the Plan Document and legal controls as defined by the IRS.

Professional Consultants are:

Actuarial Services:            Milliman Inc.

Investment Services:        Morgan Stanley Wealth Management

Legal Counsel:                Semo Law Group

Auditor/Certified Public Accountant: Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP

### **Membership**

The Pension Board is comprised of seven members. Each member also serves as a Trustee of the Trust. The All American Council elects six members (three clergy and three non-clergy) and the Holy Synod appoints one hierarch as the Episcopal Moderator. The Trustees elect one member to serve as Chairman of the Board. The Board supervises the Pension Office Staff.

*Trustees:* Bishop David, *Synodal Liaison*; Fr. Gleb McFatter, Chair; Fr. Matthew Tate; Mr. Barry Gluntz; Fr. John Zdinak; Mr. Theodore Bazil; Matushka Mary Buletza-Breton

*OCA Pension Board Staff:* Ms. Maureen Ahearn, *Administrator*, Ms. Barbara Anderson, *Bookkeeper*

*Four Trustee positions are eligible for re-election at this 19<sup>th</sup> All American Council:* Fr. Matthew Tate; Fr. John Zdinak; Mr. Theodore Bazil; Mr. Barry Gluntz

### **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

The Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan offers OCA participants the opportunity for a secure financial income in retirement. Therefore, through membership in the Plan, participants can not only fulfill what Fr. Alexander Schmemmann refers to in his book “For The Life of the World” the Christian mission of “preaching Christ” but also to experience the “wholeness” and “holiness” of the Christian life through one aspect of it – a secure retirement income for their own future and the future of their fellow clergy and church workers.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Increased Flexibility:* The plan adopted a provision allowing retired priests to serve in Missions where needed while collecting benefits from the plan. Also, the plan adopted a provision allowing for “In-Service Benefits” for members who are over age 75. Discussion has begun on ways the plan may be able to assist the Bishops with distressed parish situations.

*Increased Membership:* The plan currently has the highest active member count to date: 352 active contributing members and 189 monthly benefit recipients. The board continues to work with the Bishops/Designees to assure that newly hired clergy and their parish employers are provided with pension enrollment information at the point of hire. Also, continued effort has been made to enroll clergy and eligible lay employees who are not yet members of the plan. As a reminder, the AAC has mandated that all qualifying clergy are required to be in the pension plan and that the plan is to be offered to all qualifying lay church workers. Also, the plan stipulates that parishes who currently do not have clergy assigned are still required to contribute the church’s share (8%) to the plan.

*Increased Funding:* The Board has initiated plans to develop additional funding for the plan through the use of bequests and donations. Through these vehicles, individuals/trusts/corporations can benefit the entire population of clergy and lay church workers who are currently enrolled and those who will be enrolled in the future. For example, an OCA member has made the pension plan a beneficiary of an IRA. These funds will increase the funding status of the plan and provide additional stability.

*Increased Communication:* The Board continues to provide annual reports to the Chancellor/Treasurer gatherings and Board representatives have been available to attend diocesan and deanery meetings when invited. The Administrator regularly visits with the graduating classes at St. Tikhon and St. Vladimir Seminaries.

*Improving Investment Performance:* As of March 9, 2018, the Plan's investments totaled \$25.5 M. The average compound return on investments, net of fees for the five years March, 2013-March, 2018, was 8.06% versus our benchmark of 6.63% and actuarial assumption of 7%. The average return for the twelve months March, 2017 – March, 2018 was 11.08% versus our benchmark of 11.23%. In January, 2016 the assumptions for terminations and salary scale were updated by our actuarial consultants, Milliman, Inc. which reduced the funded status of the plan as of January 1, 2018 to 72.7% (see attached graph).

## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

The OCA Pension Board, with actuarial and money management support, always conducts all business with a projected 30-40 year outlook. With this in mind, the Board will continue working to encourage a greater level of participation from all clergy and eligible lay staff. An increase in membership will strengthen the current 72.7% funding to project the Plan toward full funding.

The Pension Board will continue to focus on education by providing meaningful retirement information for seminary educators, clergy, and eligible lay staff. In addition, Pension Plan information will be periodically distributed by Bishops/Designees to confirm participation expectations for clergy and parishes.

As you may know, retirement plans are not often available for many vocations in our current economic climate. It is important that the OCA clergy and eligible lay employees understand, appreciate and utilize the benefit opportunity the Pension Board has developed through the years. We are thankful for the foresight of the original founders (back in the 70's) who planted the seed that the Plan could build and improve upon to reach the stability it has today and the potential to continue to grow.

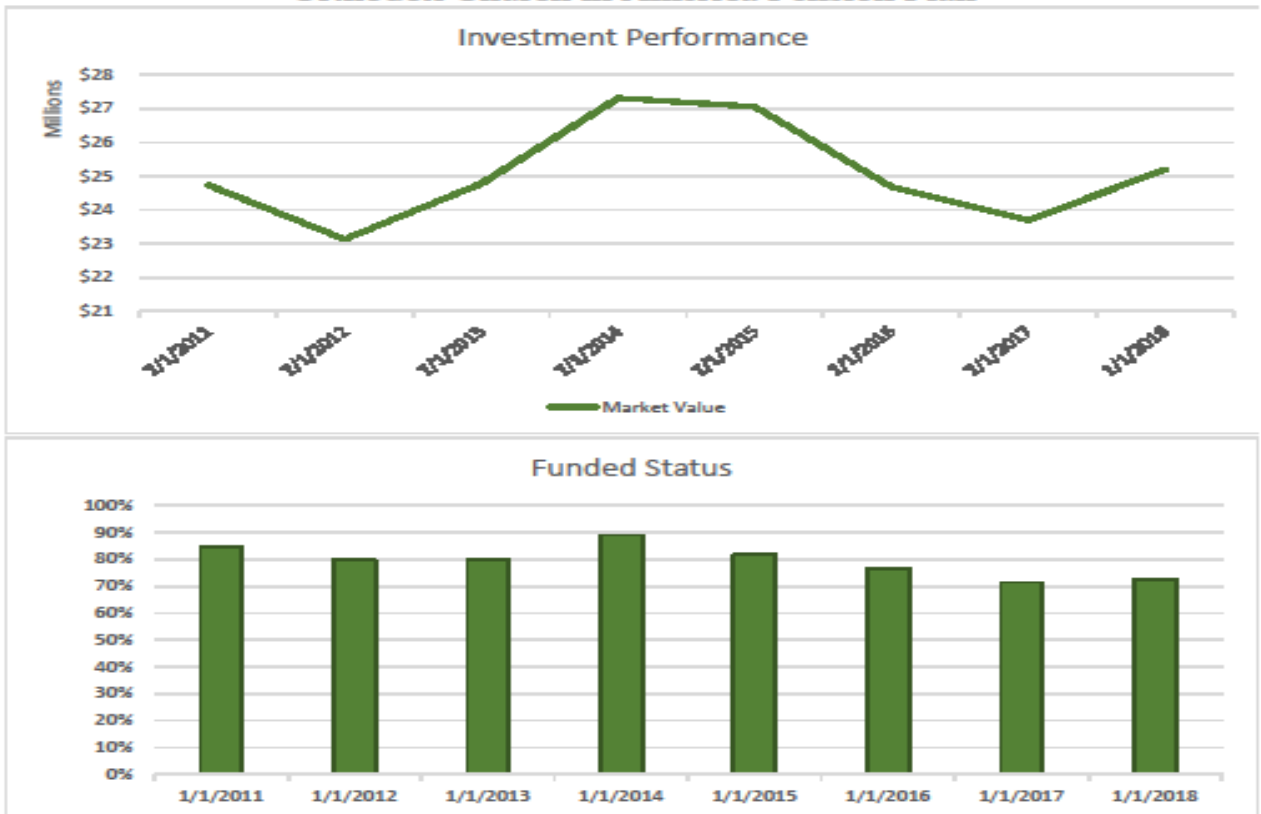
## **Conclusion**

With our ever-changing political and economic climate, the Pension Board acts as responsible stewards of the Plan. The Pension Board Trustees take the fiduciary duty to all members very seriously throughout their volunteer tenure of service. The Plan is healthy and strong. We address our Mission to provide a dependable retirement vehicle for the OCA, and with determination, we strive toward our vision of offering participants the opportunity to focus on experiencing the wholeness of the Christian life, having peace of mind while developing a retirement income for their own future and the future of their fellow clergy and church workers.

We encourage you to attend our Pension Plan workshop on Thursday here at the hotel to discuss any questions and comments. You may also contact the Pension Board at: *Pension Administrator, OCA Pension Plan, 516-922-0550 x 142, email: [pension@oca.org](mailto:pension@oca.org)*

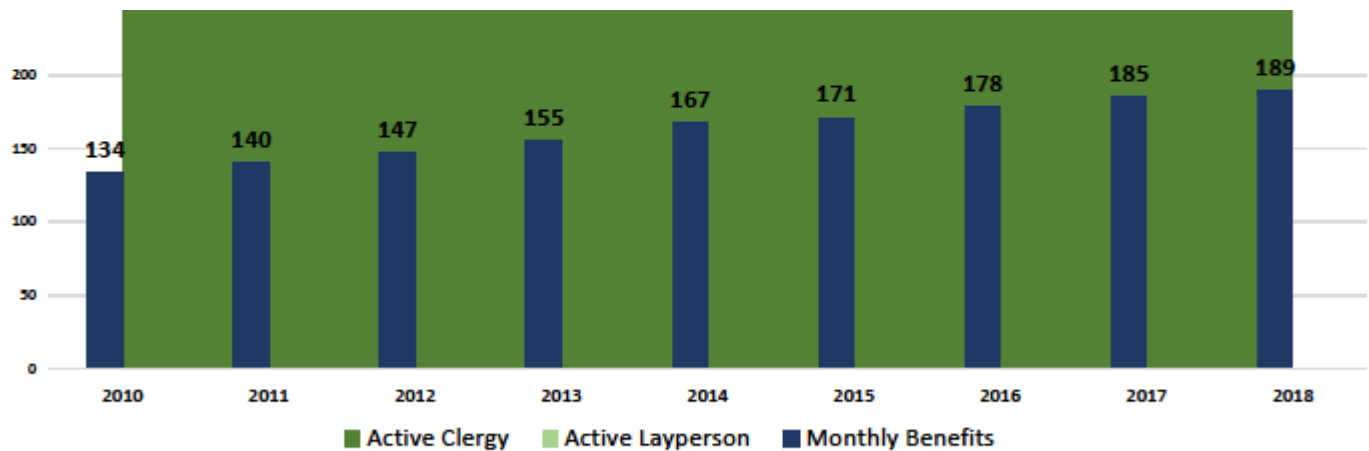


## Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan



**NOTES:**

Results for 2011-2018 were shown in each of the respective actuarial valuation reports and are based on assumptions and provisions in that year's valuation report.



## **L. Fellowship of Orthodox Christians (FOCA)**

### **Mandate**

*Witnessing Our Faith by Charitable Works through Fellowship*

We are the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, and our mission is to proclaim, share and reveal our Orthodox Christian Faith through service, fellowship and example.

We strive to accomplish this by:

1. Studying the tenets of our Faith
2. Supporting and encouraging Orthodox Youth ministries
3. Supporting and encouraging missionary growth of our church
4. Encouraging and promoting unity among all Orthodox jurisdictions
5. Establishing practical means for Orthodox Christians to endure lasting friendships on local and national levels through networking
6. Providing educational, cultural, social and athletic activities for the people of our Orthodox Faith

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America has, throughout its history, served an important role in expanding the mission work of the Church in areas such as youth ministry, religious education, liturgical music, leadership development, financial assistance for the seminaries, and countless special projects. The original founders of the FOCA recognized a need to promote fellowship among Orthodox Christians beyond the boundaries of local parish and the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America has persevered in this mission by bringing Orthodox Christians together in Faith, Fellowship, and Service to others for more than ninety years.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon is the Spiritual Leader of the FOCA. This national organization, consisting of a network of local chapters, has two divisions: Junior division for youth ages 10-17 and Senior division for ages 18 and above. The National Executive Board is elected each year by the national convention body and oversees the projects, communication, and administration of the Fellowship.

### **Membership**

*Members of the National Executive Board: Fr. Theodore Boback, Spiritual Advisor; Marge Kovach, President; Allison Steffaro, Vice President; Danielle Ilchuk, Secretary; Michael Bowan, Treasurer; Beckey Tesar, Immediate Past President*

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America continues to promote the work of the Church while bring like-minded individuals together in social settings as we strive: “To witness our faith by charitable works through fellowship.” Our largest single charitable initiative to date is the \$300,000 raised in support of the Married Student Housing project at St. Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary. Chapter, District, and National fundraisers along with personal donations contributed to fulfilling this pledge at the 89<sup>th</sup> National FOCA Convention held in Atlanta in conjunction with the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council.

Individual chapters and districts engage in local community outreach, service projects, religious, educational, athletic, and social events in addition to support of the following national programs including but not limited to:

1. Scholarships for higher education
2. *Gifts of Love* annual appeal in support of a particular cause:
  - \$10,000 for printing English/Yupik language religious education coloring books for the Yupik children in Alaska (2016)
  - \$12,500 for the Diocese of Alaska toward the renovation and rehabilitation of St. Nicholas Chapel in Kenai, Alaska (2017)
  - \$11,000 to date in support for IOCC hurricane relief efforts (2018)
3. Support for Seminarians provided by Chapters, Districts, Parishes, and individuals in the form of:
  - Fulfilling St. Nicholas “Wish lists” for families of married seminarian students at St. Tikhon’s Seminary and St. Vladimir’s Seminary. Gift cards are distributed to those at St. Herman’s Seminary given the expense of sending packages
  - Providing monthly financial assistance to seminary students in need of support
4. Celebration of Faith annual creative arts contest encourages all youth of the Church to express their faith. The 2018 contest is based on the 19<sup>th</sup> AAC theme: “For the Life of the World”
5. National Basketball Tournament, historically our single largest youth event, joining youth together for a weekend of friendly competition, worship, and fellowship
6. National Bowling and Golf Tournaments participants range in age but enjoy the opportunity to come together for a weekend of friendly competition, worship, and fellowship
7. Camping programs offer a place where youth can experience living within an Orthodox Christian community in an environment that nurtures life-long friendships and young adults have an opportunity to gain leadership experience as counselors

## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

The importance of uniting Orthodox Christians of all ages in Faith, Fellowship, and Service is as pronounced today as it was in 1927. In particular, it is imperative that Orthodox Youth develop a supportive network of friends in the Faith, among whom they share the same Orthodox Christian values and views on morality, as they navigate this ever increasingly secular society.

Adding to the list National events sponsored annually, three special committees are developing new initiatives voted upon by the delegates at the 91st Annual FOCA National Convention in Hershey, Pennsylvania, this past September:

1. National Leadership Conference – planned for October 2019 near Cleveland, Ohio. Keynote speaker: Protodeacon Peter Danilchick will address Christian leadership.
2. Choir Conference – committee is developing preliminary plans and opportunities for collaboration with the OCA's Music and Youth Departments.
3. National Pan Orthodox Youth Rally – preliminary discussions to gauge interest and support for the idea are ongoing. This enormous effort will require a great deal of coordination with the Youth Departments of the OCA and other jurisdictions as well as the OCF.

## **Conclusion**

For more than nine decades, the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America has been assisting in the work of the Church while providing practical means for Orthodox Christians to endure lasting friendships on a local and national level. We strive to perpetuate a mutually beneficial relationship amongst our chapters, the national FOCA, parishes, and the national Church. As an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, the FOCA remains steadfast in our commitment to working in collaboration with the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops, Chancery Staff, and members of the Department of Youth, Young Adults for the Glory of God. This relationship ensures that we can continue to promote our mission of fellowship and the joining together of Orthodox Christians in service to other members of our Orthodox faith as well other charitable causes. It also affords us, as individuals, the opportunity to strive to be good stewards of the talents and resources with which we have been blessed. Membership in the FOCA provides the network, leadership, and resources by which we can accomplish this on a large scale outside of our individual parishes. What we do, we do together in faith and love, for the Glory of God.

PRAY, STUDY, TOIL, BE TEMPERATE

## **M. Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America (SOCA)**

### **Mandate**

The Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America was established in 2013 to build upon the foundation of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, which for decades provided funding for departments and their ministries. Following the resolution of the 18th All American Council to move to a proportional giving model as the best means of

supporting the work of the Church, the Stewards of the OCA has become even more important as we continue to seek to expand the mission of the Church in North America.

The Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America is staffed by Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak who dedicates one-third of his full-time work for the Chancery to the office. Archdeacon Matusiak is supervised by OCA Treasurer Melanie Ringa, and reports to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod of Bishops. Presently there is no advancement or development committee of the Metropolitan Council. Archdeacon Joseph has been in his position since July 2016.

The Stewards seeks to enroll parishes and individuals as “stewards” of the OCA through appeals, direct mailings, personal connections and presentations given to parishes, and dioceses. Over the two years of Archdeacon Joseph’s tenure two appeals have been implemented with thirty-five parishes becoming Steward parishes in 2017.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Appeals:* In August 2016 a digital appeal was deployed using email and web / social media postings. In November 2017 a digital as well as direct mail appeal to all parishes was deployed. This was the first direct appeal church-wide in more than ten years. Our initial target for the appeal was a Sunday in October, however due to the many natural disasters which affected the United States and Mexico in the Fall of 2017 we decided to push Steward Sunday back to the middle of November. Going forward our hope is to settle on a Sunday in October which will become the annual Steward Sunday appeal date. Of greatest importance to the work of the program is to establish consistent date for the appeal.

*2017 Steward Sunday Appeal:* The 2017 appeal had four components:

1. Personal contact with clergy by email and phone;
2. Social media / web posts highlighting the work of the ministry departments and announcing the appeal;
3. Direct email to clergy announcing the appeal;
4. Direct mail to all parishes that included a letter from His Beatitude and an appeal poster.

*Professional Development:* In November 2017 Archdeacon Joseph completed the Principles and Techniques in Fundraising course at the Fund Raising School at Indiana University. The course has become an invaluable tool for the work of the Stewards.

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

It is the goal of the Stewards to work ever more closely with the communications team of the OCA to continue to create content highlighting the work of the OCA and her ministry departments in an effort to reach parishes and individuals who are interested providing additional financial support for the work of the OCA. The Stewards will continue with its annual Steward Sunday appeal and will focus on enrolling individuals, as well as parishes, as sustaining donors of the Stewards.

## 2. Institutions

### A. Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery

#### Mandate

A stavropighial monastic community for women under the omophorion of Metropolitan Tikhon.

In addition to providing a monastic environment where women may grow for a lifetime into the fullness of the Christian calling, our monastery continues to offer an outreach to individual guests and small groups of pilgrims. We offer an opportunity for solitude and silence, an experience of the traditional life of prayer away from cell phones and television, within a beautiful wild and rural farm environment. We are especially a “safe place” for women who have experienced abuse from within their Church communities.

#### Membership

As of Spring 2018, we number 5 members:

*Schema Nuns (Life-professed):* Mother Raphaela, *abbess*; Mother Katherine, *farm manager*; Mother Anna, *store manager and worker*; Mother Michaela, *guest mistress, general housekeeper and gardener*

*Riassafor:* Sister Piama

#### Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council

Since the last All-American Council, our publishing outreach has changed. Through our online store, attached to the above websites, we still offer liturgical texts, sharing especially the fruits of the liturgical life we have developed in our chapel over the years with the help of many friends and advisors. In addition, we offer volumes of essays written from the experience gained from the over forty years of our monastery’s life. We have temporarily put on hold publishing our small “magazine,” *Essays and Notes*, as well the additional offerings of liturgical texts we still plan. In the meantime, with the help of friends who have the experience we lack, we are developing more of an online presence with a new website and Facebook page. We also still support the Myrrhbearers “Melia” Center of Jerusalem, an outreach and life-line for the women of Palestine as well as a new venture supporting a traditional weaver in Ecuador. The fruits of their labors and ours may be found and purchased from the store on our website noted above.

Thankfully, even though few of our parishes are suggesting the concept of Christian vocations to their parishioners, women who are considering testing their vocation to the monastic life visit the monastery. One of these was received as a novice after the last AAC and was tonsured as a riassafor by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, during his most recent pastoral visit in Great Lent of this year. We also continue to see growth in our extended community: In addition to occasional pilgrims and guests, women depend on regular visits and time spent in the monastic environment in order to face the demands of their life in the world. Others depend on the correspondence and prayers of the monastics. They also see clearly that their contribution to the monastery’s life is

critical. As a result, their pledges and support help cover the monastery's financial burden, even over this past winter when heating bills have been astronomical. We continue to offer an "apprentice" program for women wanting to spend a longer time living with us in community, whether or not they are candidates for monastic life. In addition to bringing a modest increase in numbers of monastics, this greatly adds to our extended community.

## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

We will continue to bring the crisis in Christian life vocations before the Church. While clerical vocations are certainly central to its life, without a sense of calling among the faithful in parish communities, both the Christian marriages which must undergird parish life and monastic vocations will continue to be endangered. The Lord Himself bore witness to the need to prepare disciples who can enter into the harvest of salvation, truly for the Life of the World. While our vocation may not often take us out into the world, we believe God uses prayer to reach places where none of us can go in person, where only He can work to save and heal. With St. Seraphim, we work to save our own souls so that a thousand around us will be saved. We trust that in living out our lives in the solitude offered by our environment, our growth may be like that of St. Herman's: Even though his monastic community died out around him and he died alone and forgotten by all but his immediate Eskimo neighbors, the miracle of our Orthodox Church in America is the best witness to the monastic life we share with him.

In addition to our own daily monastic "readers'" services, we and our guests depend on local clergy who provide liturgies in our chapel. Knowing that it will be a unique calling, we nevertheless look towards the time when a priest will serve regular Sunday and feast day liturgies in our monastery chapel. In the meantime, we and our guests attend liturgy with nearby Church communities, while continuing to save towards providing housing for someone like a retired priest who would appreciate the chance to serve, while not having the burden of parish obligations.

## **Conclusion**

We do invite those of you who are seeking to deepen your life of prayer in order to prepare yourselves for the Lord's mandate to "go out into the world," to spend time with us. Our guest facilities are small but comfortable, set in a beautiful, scenic environment. There is more to growth in the Church than numbers; we invite you to grow with us in all the ways the Lord offers to us.

## **B. New Skete Monasteries**

### **1. The Monks of New Skete**

#### **Mandate**

New Skete is a monastic community of men and women rooted in the tradition of the Eastern Church. Through prayer, worship, and the work of our hands, we seek to respond to the mystery of God and the Gospel's power to transform human living. Welcoming all, we seek to bridge the old with the new and to witness to the sacredness of all creation.

To carry out this mission...

We embrace our responsibility to foster the single-minded search for God in each other and in those we meet.

We are open to others of all beliefs through retreats, days of recollection and liturgical services.

We interact with the wider community in accord with our way of life.

We are firmly committed to the equality of all persons, and, in very simple ways, we reverence all of creation as the dwelling place of God.

We aim to be responsive to the prophetic character of our vocation which from the very beginning of monasticism in the desert of Skete has made monks and nuns responsible not only for attaining the end for which they were created but for that of all God's people.

As heirs of these primitive Christian monks and nuns, we want to live in harmony with their spirit especially that of the Eastern monastic fathers and mothers. In adapting our own everyday life from tradition; we hope to show in our own lives the perennial nature of Christian monasticism, especially for contemporary America.

Though the emphasis may vary in monastic life at different times and places, our life emphasizes the liturgical offices of each day. Every aspect of our life receives impetus and nourishment from the daily and seasonal celebrations of the church. We live in union with the praying church. Our worship seeks to edify, to inspire and to raise us all to that reality for which we were made: union with God.

Monastics strive for enlightenment and wisdom by seeking to grow in knowledge and understanding. Therefore we continue day-by-day to reflect on all aspects of the spiritual life.

We live with the conviction that an authentic and vibrant monasticism is an essential ingredient to healthy Church life. By nature, the monastic vocation is contemplative and apostolic, challenging both the Church and the world at large to fuller life.

Monasticism has always incarnated itself within a particular cultural context, so throughout our history we have worked to express the mystery and dynamism of our vocation in a manner appropriate to our culture and times.

Monastics pray in the secret of their hearts, in the privacy of their cells, fostering a spirit of silence and recollection which permeates all other aspects of our lives. Personal prayer is cultivated with the simplicity and freedom of the children of God. Like all else, personal prayer is nourished by and benefits from the choral worship of the entire community.

In accord with the simplicity that characterizes monastic life, we earn our daily bread by our own hands. As all the fathers and mothers of the monastic life have taught and practiced themselves, so do we value and esteem this work. We find in work a time-honored means of self-discipline and growth.



We hold in special esteem the virtue of hospitality. Though our own means are limited, we extend to all who come our way the basic courtesies of Christian charity and hospitality. Whenever possible, we are ready and willing to provide whatever may be asked of us in a friendly and cheerful way with respect and compassion. What we do to others so do we do to Christ, mindful always that we are brothers and sisters of all.

## **Membership**

Br Christopher (Savage), Prior, Hieromonk; Br Luke (Dorr), Econom; Br Stavros (Winner), Ecclesiarch; Br Peter (Kushner), Archdeacon; Br John (Hoffman); Br Mark (Labish), Hieromonk; Br Ambrose (Miles); Br Gregory (Tobin)

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

While we strive to live the injunction to pray always, we also gather twice per day to celebrate the offices of Matins and Vespers and the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and Feast days. In this, we are conscious of being a place of prayer for the Church, indeed for the world. There is no doubt that monasticism is a counter-cultural reality in today’s world. Many people question what relevance monasticism has since they presume monks and nuns live in a very insular way. We believe nothing could be further from the truth. Aside from offering hospitality to retreatants, pilgrims, and guests, within the context of our liturgical life we stand as a witness of prayer and intercession for our brothers and sisters in the world. This is part of the hidden mystery and significance of monastic life, and leads us to carry out our vocation with a sense of gratitude for the abundant life we have been given.

We make our living through the breeding of German Shepherd Dogs and the training of various breeds of dogs for outside owners. It has often been noted publicly that we have made a real contribution in these fields and that our work has increased the quality of life between many owners and their dogs. We also engage in various other endeavors, including the writing of books on dog training and spirituality, offering hospitality for retreatants, and run a small gift shop to make the money needed to keep body and soul together.

We engage in development in part to fulfill the requirements of being a 501(c)3 Not for Profit organization, in part to gain the funds we need to operate and maintain our tax-exempt status, but also, and perhaps most importantly, to engage and involve those who cannot live the monastic life in the life and mission of our community.

As stated above, we offer hospitality to various and sundry guests. We welcome all sorts of visitors, Christians as well as non-Christians, Orthodox as well as Non-Orthodox. We are also the center for the sacramental life of a number local people (our chapel community). We also offer the ministries of retreats and days of recollection as well as spiritual direction to those who wish to avail themselves of these opportunities.

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Publishing:* 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of New Skete and featured a number of special projects and events to mark the celebration. We released a 2 CD retrospective of New Skete’s liturgical music, “**The 50th Anniversary Collection**”, with recordings from the very beginning of the community to more recent selections.

We published a series of essays in book form entitled, “**Fossil or Leaven? The Church We Pass On: Essays in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of New Skete**”. These essays were by both community members as well as friends, and the book was published by Alexander Press in January, 2017.

*The Companions of New Skete:* In January of 2017 we launched the Companions of New Skete as a non-residential community of friends that wish to be more connected with New Skete. The response to this initiative has been encouraging and we have approximately 135 members so far. Communication is conducted primarily over the Internet, and Companions have been receiving meditations three times a week to help support their spiritual practice. There is a rule of life that they follow, and we are hoping to gradually expand what we can offer them by way of periodic webinars and special retreat events.

*The Volunteer Residency Program:* Last year we experimented with developing a program for individuals who are interested in living with us for an extended period of time. We are calling this “The Volunteer Residency Program”. There are no strings attached to this program, save for being serious about experiencing the monastic life and deepening one’s own spiritual practice. Such people may or may not be interested in a monastic vocation. The program is intended to give a person the opportunity to be immersed in our life and to be a source of help to us in the various types of work we do.

*Renovations:* Perhaps the most significant project that took place over the course of 2017 was the **renovation of Holy Transfiguration Temple**. This was a project that took up much energy, raised significant funds from friends and benefactors and whose end result has pleased everyone. The temple has been restored to its previous beauty, but now with many improvements and enhancements: new siding and roof, new cupolas, handicap accessible entrances, new lighting, all new insulation of walls and ceiling, AC for the warmer months, wood flooring in the altar area, a much larger sacristy area, and new landscaping that will transpire this coming spring. It is certainly something that we can take pride in and represents our hope in a viable future.

## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

We plan to continue and expand our hosting of spiritual retreats here at the monastery. Our guesthouse has been fully renovated and now can accommodate many more people, and two day-long retreats (in Lent and during the Fall) attract close to 60 people. We are also open to presenting a weekend retreat to organizations such as “The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians” at individual chapters.

We intend to use the Companions of New Skete as a source of renewal for people who are looking to integrate contemplative values into their daily lives. We believe that this is not only an important outreach of the monastery, but is a concrete way to help support companions who are getting more fully involved in their parishes and churches.

We intend to look for creative ways to develop monastic vocations in the Church, through videos, podcasts, and other forms of social media. We will continue offering two “Seeker’s Weeks” each year for individuals who are exploring the possibility of a monastic vocation. These events would allow interested individuals to experience monastic life firsthand for several days to a week, in a program designed specifically to that interest.

All of the ministries at the heart of our life are not for ourselves alone, but truly “for the life of the world”. Our monastic life is formally dedicated to doing whatever we can within the context of our vocation to make the Gospel come alive for people in our day and age.

## **Conclusion**

In Jn 10:10 Jesus says, “I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly.” Since our beginning in 1966, New Skete has dedicated itself to bringing a bit of that Gospel abundance to both the Church and world at large. As disciples of Jesus, our life is truly not for ourselves alone, but for the life of the world, being fueled by the vision of the Lord Jesus. As monks, we believe our role is to live the monastic life as honestly and authentically as possible, in a manner appropriate for our day and age. Our hope is that in some small way this may further God’s vision for world by sharing the fruits of our life with those we come in contact with.

## **2. OUR LADY OF THE SIGN / NUNS OF NEW SKETE**

### **Mandate**

New Skete is a monastic community of men and women rooted in the tradition of the Eastern Church. Through prayer, worship, and the work of our hands, we seek to respond to the mystery of God and the Gospel's power to transform human living. Welcoming all, we seek to bridge the old with the new and to witness to the sacredness of all creation.

To carry out this mission...

We embrace our responsibility to foster the single-minded search for God in each other and in those we meet.

We are open to others of all beliefs through retreats, days of recollection and liturgical services.

We interact with the wider community in accord with our way of life.

We are firmly committed to the equality of all persons and we reverence all of creation as the dwelling place of God.

We aim to be responsive to the prophetic character of our vocation which from the very beginning of monasticism in the desert of Skete has made monks and nuns responsible not only for attaining the end for which they were created but for that of all God’s people.

As heirs of these primitive Christian monks and nuns, we want to live in harmony with their spirit especially that of the Eastern monastic fathers and mothers. In adapting our own everyday life from tradition; we hope to show in our own lives the perennial nature of Christian monasticism, especially for contemporary America.

Though the emphasis may vary in monastic life at different times and places, our life emphasizes the liturgical offices of each day. Every aspect of our life receives impetus and nourishment from the daily and seasonal celebrations of the church. We live in

union with the praying church. Our worship seeks to edify, to inspire and to raise us all to that reality for which we were made: union with God.

Monastics strive for enlightenment and wisdom by seeking to grow in knowledge and understanding. Therefore we continue day-by-day to reflect on all aspects of the spiritual life.

We live with the conviction that an authentic and vibrant monasticism is an essential ingredient to healthy Church life. By nature, the monastic vocation is contemplative and apostolic, challenging both the Church and the world at large to fuller life. Monasticism has always incarnated itself within a particular cultural context, so throughout our history we have worked to express the mystery and dynamism of our vocation in a manner appropriate to our culture and times.

Monastics pray in the secret of their hearts, in the privacy of their cells, fostering a spirit of silence and recollection which permeates all other aspects of our lives. Personal prayer is nourished by and benefits from the choral worship of the entire community.

In accord with the simplicity that characterizes monastic life, we earn our daily bread by our own hands. As all the fathers and mothers of the monastic life have taught and practiced themselves, so do we value and esteem this work. We find in work a time-honored means of self-discipline and growth.

We hold in special esteem the virtue of hospitality. Though our own means are limited, we extend to all who come our way the basic courtesies of Christian charity and hospitality. Whenever possible, we are ready and willing to provide whatever may be asked of us in a friendly and cheerful way with respect and compassion. What we do to others so do we do to Christ, mindful always that we are brothers and sisters of all.

## **Membership**

Sr. Cecelia (Harvey), *Prioress*; Sr. Patricia (Lawless), *Econom*; Sr. Rebecca (Cown), *Secretary*; Sr. Jolene (Robinson), *Novice*; Patricia Cassidy, *Resident*

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

While we strive to live the injunction to pray always, we also gather twice per day to celebrate the offices of Matins and Vespers and the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and Feast days. In this, we are conscious of being a place of prayer for the Church, indeed for the world. There is no doubt that monasticism is a counter-cultural reality in today's world. Many people question what relevance monasticism has since they presume monks and nuns live in a very insular way. We believe nothing could be further from the truth. Aside from offering hospitality to retreatants, pilgrims, and guests, within the context of our liturgical life we stand as a witness of prayer and intercession for our brothers and sisters in the world. This is part of the hidden mystery and significance of monastic life, and leads us to carry out our vocation with a sense of gratitude for the abundant life we have been given.

We make our living through the Liturgical Arts such as icon painting, retreats, hospitality and especially by producing bakery goods such as our well known cheesecakes, cheese spreads, and pancake mix. We also engage in various other endeavors,

including books on spirituality, and run a small gift shop to make the money needed to keep body and soul together. While not a fund raising endeavor, we also help the monks of New Skete caring for their German Shepherd dogs and raising an occasional puppy.

We engage in development in part to fulfill the requirements of being a 501(c)3 Not for Profit organization, in part to gain the funds we need to operate and maintain our tax-exempt status, but also, and perhaps most importantly, to engage and involve those who cannot live the monastic life in the life and mission of our community.

As stated above, we offer hospitality to various and sundry guests. We welcome all sorts of visitors, Christians as well as non-Christians, Orthodox as well as Non-Orthodox. We are also the center for the sacramental life of a number local people (our chapel community). We also offer the ministries of spiritual direction to those who wish to avail themselves of these opportunities.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Publishing:* 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of New Skete and featured a number of special projects and events to mark the celebration. We released a 2 CD retrospective of New Skete's liturgical music, "**The 50th Anniversary Collection**", with recordings from the very beginning of the community to more recent selections.

A book entitled, "**Fossil or Leaven? The Church We Pass On: Essays in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of New Skete**" became available. These essays were by both community members as well as friends, and the book was published by Alexander Press in January, 2017.

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## **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

We plan to continue our hosting of spiritual retreats here at the monastery. While our guest area can accommodate one to three individuals we share in the two day-long retreats (in Lent and during the Fall) which attracts close to 60 people. We are also open to presenting a weekend retreat to organizations such as “The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians” at individual chapters. In the fall of 2018 an icon workshop will host up to 15 for learning icon painting.

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We intend to look for creative ways to develop monastic vocations in the Church, through videos, podcasts, and other forms of social media. We will continue offering two times for “Seeker’s” each year for individuals who are exploring the possibility of a monastic vocation. These events would allow interested individuals to experience monastic life firsthand for several days to a week, in a program designed specifically to that interest.

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## **Conclusion**

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## **C. St. Catherine’s Representation Church**

### **Mandate**

The mandate fo St. Catherine’s is to minister to English-speaking Orthodox Christians in Moscow. Among the regular parishioners there have been Americans, English, Australians, Dutch and Belgians, as well as Orthodox Christians from the conventionally more traditional Orthodox countries such as Greece, Serbia and Romania. The growing community is, of course, made up overwhelmingly of Russians of all ages and backgrounds. The OCA representation church in Moscow provides for them a unique window upon world-wide Orthodox, a means of coming to know the truth of the Orthodox adage that it is the faith, not nationality, that brings people together. St. Catherine’s OCA Church has become a byword in Moscow for the unity and the universality of the Holy Orthodox faith.

## **Membership**

Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, *Dean and Representative*; Archpriest Christopher Hill; Archpriest Valentin Vasechko; Priest Andrei Tregubov, *not officially assigned but has served in the parish for the past 7 years*; Deacon Dimitri Asratian; Deacon Kirill Dotsenko

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

The report is divided into two sections. First part of the report is focused on the responsibilities as the Dean of St Catherine Church and the life of the parish. Second part of the report focuses on the responsibilities as the Representative of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon to Moscow Patriarchate.

For the record, I would also like to state that my family and I arrived in Moscow Russia on January 30th 2018 and I have assumed my responsibilities as the Dean and Representative on February 1st 2018.

Saint Catherine Church in Moscow Russia is a very special and unique. Uniqueness of the Church has to do with the fact that it is located in the center of Moscow which has a population of 14 million people. This presents certain challenges with the fact that very few parishioners live within walking distance from the church. At the same time Saint Catherine is a very special place due to its rich history. We know that it was built in the 18th century and its architecture is one of a kind. It is the only church in Moscow dedicated to Great martyr Catherine. Saint Tikhon served parish feast day December 7th, four years in a row before his repose.

Priority for me as the Dean of the parish was to increase liturgical life. Before my arrival liturgical life of the parish was vigil on Saturday evening, Divine Liturgy Sunday morning, and Akathist to St Catherine Wednesday evening. The changes we have made to the liturgical life were to have divine services everyday. More detailed schedule of services can be viewed on the parish website. Divine Liturgy every Saturday and Sunday, Akathist to Saint Herman every Thursday, Akathist to Saint Catherine every Tuesday, Akathist to the Mother of God every Monday and Akathist to Saint John of San Francisco every Sunday and Wednesday. Every Sunday following Divine Liturgy lesser blessing of water and panikhida. All major and lesser feast and all major saints, Vigil and Divine Liturgy.

The other important aspect of the life of the parish was to make sure that clergy and everyone who labors at the church is fed. Private donations were collected to purchase appliances and to hire a cook. During lunch hour, it gives me an opportunity to be in the midst of our clergy and laity and to be able to discuss everyday issues of the life of the parish. With private donations one of the rooms on the second floor has been remodeled to use as trapeza.

Matushka Vera has started the childrens' choir. Every Sunday the children sing responses to the Divine Liturgy in both English and Slavonic. Our professional choir (which gets paid for every service) continues to sing during daily and weekend services. Matushka has also started a choir for volunteers. Choir practices take place once a week, however the fruits of their labors will take a while. At St Catherine Church

we have also started English club. Every Monday at 7 pm about 20 young adults gather to practice speaking English.

Apart from the liturgical aspect of the parish, there are also administrative responsibilities. The financial aspect of the parish was alarming. To give few examples, the month of January 2018 was about 56,000 rubles in the negative. The month of February was about 80,000 rubles in the negative. Every month for the past few years, St Catherine Church has been paying about 160,000 rubles for heat, that's equivalent of \$2800. Monthly cost for internet was at 15,300 rubles. St. Catherine Church had 12 telephone lines that were being paid for every month. By Gods grace, things are slowly changing. The month of March the parish was 104,000 rubles in the plus. The month of April 252,000 rubles in the plus. We have cancelled 12 telephone line and kept four, one for our office, for starosta, for security guards and for bookstore. Heating has been reduced from 160,000 rubles to about 52,000 rubles.

The parish does not have a bank account and this is due to the fact that we owe the Russian tax department about 1.2million rubles. This is equivalent to \$21k. With my arrival, we have started to pay taxes every month, starting with February. In addition we are making progress to pay off the debts. As I'm writing this report we owe about 1 million.

My responsibilities as the representative: On February 1st, served Divine Liturgy at Christ the Savior Cathedral, representing His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon at Patriarch Kirills anniversary of enthronement.

On February 6th-8th, flew to Kiev Ukraine, represented His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon at a conference dedicated to 100th anniversary of martyrdom of Hieromartyr Vladimir Metropolitan of Kiev.

February 9th - 14th, His Grace Bishop Daniel arrived to Moscow.

On February 25th served Divine Liturgy at Christ the Savior Cathedral with Patriarch Kirill, representing His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon at Sunday of Orthodoxy.

On February 27th, we were able to purchase a vehicle for the needs of the Representation and the work of Dean of St Catherine. Funds to purchase the vehicle were donated by Chenega Corporation. Vehicle for the work of the Representation and the Dean in Moscow is a must.

March 5th - 9th Ms Melanie Ringa arrived to Moscow. During her stay we were able to closely look at the financial aspect of St Catherine Church and Representation.

March 8th, served Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with Patriarch Kirill at the Pokrov Monastery for the Feast of Saint Matrona, representing His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon.

April 8th, served Pascha Vespers at Christ the Savior Cathedral with Patriarch Kirill, representing His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon.

April 19th - 27th, with the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, I visited Anchorage Alaska where I was invited by Chenega Corporation. With the blessing of His Grace Bishop David attended vigil at St Tikhon Church in Anchorage Alaska, next



day served liturgy. On the way back to Moscow, I've stopped in San Francisco in order to venerate the relics of St. John. Attended vigil and Divine Liturgy.

May 5th, served Divine Liturgy with Patriarch Kirill at Butovo. Every year on a Saturday before the 5th Sunday after Pascha, the Russian Orthodox Church commemorates Newmartyrs and Confessors at Butovo. This is a significant day for St. Catherine Church because from 1915 - 1917 the Dean of St Catherine, Archpriest Peter Postnikov was martyred in Butovo on December 11th 1937. Father Peter has not yet been canonized. His granddaughter Larissa attends St. Catherine.

May 8th, attended a ceremony of laying a wreath in Kremlin with Patriarch Kirill. This ceremony is done every year, day before Day of Victory May 9th.

The representation apartment is still under remodel. My family and I continue to live in a temporary rental apartment. God willing the remodel will soon be completed and we will be able to move in.

#### **D. St. Tikhon of Radonezh Monastery**

##### **Mandate:**

St Tikhon's Monastery is America's oldest Orthodox Monastery. Liturgy and the personal life of prayer are the most important tasks of the monastics here at St. Tikhon's Monastery. We serve the Liturgy daily and pray for the mission and work of the Church with constant supplications. We also teach and form the Seminarians attempting to convey the life and mind of the Church to each Seminarian as best we can. Life here is good but the work is difficult; however, we pray that with perseverance the mercy of God will continue towards us.

##### **Membership**

Archimandrite Sergius, Abbot; Metropolitan Herman, retired; Archbishop Michael; Archimandrite Daniel; Igumen Gabriel; Hieromonk Innokenty; Hieromonk Herman; Hierodeacon Marc; Monk Nicodemus; Monk Kyril; Monk David; Riassaphore Monk Michael; Riassaphore Monk Anton; Novice Stephen; Novice Stephanos; Novice Paul; Novice Kevin; Postulant Hesychios

##### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*St. Tikhon's Monastery Press STM:* St. Tikhon's Monastery Press has always been known for its liturgical publications, but in recent years this has become a more intense focus for us. The work is coordinated by a four-member on-sight team which works in close collaboration with a number of outside consultants for various projects.

This past year saw the publication of our new edition of the Divine Liturgy book, which is now the second of our two-volume *Hieratikon*, containing all the priest's and deacon's texts for the daily cycle of services and all three Divine Liturgies. We are grateful to His Beatitude and the Holy Synod for their attentive care and support in this milestone publication.

In 2016, we published a book of music for the Divine Liturgy all of which can be sung in one, two, three, or four parts, as needed. The past year also saw a newly-revised

Panikhida and Funeral book that builds on the foundation laid by Fr. Vladimir Soroka so many years ago.

We have many plans and hopes for the future: we are now preparing a music book for Vespers that will include texts for both Saturday and weeknight Vespers. After that we plan to turn our attention to Sunday and festal Matins. Meanwhile, we are revising and expanding our *Orthodox Daily Prayers* for use at home; this will come with a supplementary volume of additional canons and hymnography to enrich the daily prayer lives of the faithful.

His Beatitude has asked us to gather together and edit all the services to the Saints of North America, which will be included in a comprehensive publication. We also have plans underway for a series of music booklets for the twelve great feasts.

Further down the road, we look forward to revising and releasing our Horologion and Great Book of Needs.

Work such as this is painstaking and time-consuming but, as “those who love the beauty of the Lord’s house”, our goal is always to produce the highest quality publications possible. We pray that God will continue to bless our efforts so that they may bear fruit in his Vineyard.

*Financial Status:* St. Tikhon’s Monastery and Bookstore are both financially sound and stable. The current financial records are enclosed with this report as well as being available on-line at [stikhonsmonastery.org](http://stikhonsmonastery.org). We have an outside financial review every year as well as a CPA who conducts monthly reviews of all the monastery and bookstore records to make sure the institution is in compliance with currently accepted and updated accounting procedures and practices.

*The Grounds:* St. Tikhon’s has 21 buildings, three large cemeteries (one off-site cemetery: Pleasant View) and 200+ acres that need continuous upkeep and maintenance. Our hope is to make the grounds as beautiful as they can be for those who live here, those who come in Pilgrimage and those who might visit for the day and overnight stays. We also build and renovate our grounds with an intent to preserve our institution for those who come after us.

*Outreach:* The monastery continues to offer charity in many ways to our community within and without and to support and help many other institutions as well. Seven to eight percent of all monastery income is returned in the form of charitable assistance to those in and outside the Church. Our Monastery Chamber Choir continues to perform hoping to touch the hearts and lives of each hearer. Burning Bush coffee roasting (our own monastery brand) also finds its way into homes and restaurants providing an opportunity for dialog. The monastery serves the Church also through candle making and having its own custom label of blended wine which we are expanding for greater distribution in the Orthodox Church.

## **Conclusion**

St. Tikhon's Monastery strives to serve the Church humbly in various capacities. Support of the Monastery is critical to the well-being of the Church as a whole. The support and help we continue to receive encourages us, especially that of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon. We hope with God's help and mercy to continue to be a light and beacon for the world.

## **E. St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary**

### **Mandate**

"The primary mission of the Seminary lies in providing the necessary theological, liturgical, spiritual, and moral foundations for Orthodox men to become, as God so wills, good shepherds of His Holy Orthodox Church." (Seminary Bulletin) By continuing to vigorously support this mission, St. Tikhon's Seminary in turn "enables the Church Herself, in turn, to successfully carry out Her Divinely-ordained task in contemporary society." Therefore St. Tikhon's has sought to also provide educative and formational experiences to those preparing for ministry and those serving in leadership roles.

The Seminary also recognizes that many individuals choose to enroll in a professional theological training program for the fulfillment of needs other than those of ordained ministry. Among these are:

1. Preparation for general religious leadership responsibilities in parishes and other settings
2. Advanced theological study
3. Specialized ministry as religious educators or choir directors
4. Personal spiritual enrichment

Therefore, St. Tikhon's Seminary continues to support all honorable reasons for matriculation at the Seminary and participation in class.

At St. Tikhon's Seminary, the experience of personal and spiritual life in Christ is providentially illumined by the presence of St. Tikhon's Monastery, with which the seminary has historically maintained traditionally deep ties. The special accord of spirit, interdependency, and mission that are shared by the monastery and theological school is not only recognizable historically within our tradition, but continues, renewed, in the present day. Like the Apostles of old, seminarians are called to deepen their personal relationship with Christ, answering His call: "*Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.*" (Matt 4:19). Members of the monastic community: teach at the seminary, celebrate daily services, and carry out work throughout the campus, all the while reflecting "the one thing needful." Within this deeply spiritual context seminary formation flowers as seminarians seek to discern the will of the Lord in their lives, some finding that answer in entering monastic life.

### **Membership**

*Administration: Metropolitan Tikhon, President; Archbishop Michael, Rector; Archpriest Steven Voytovich, Dean; Mr. Michael Herzak, Board Chair*

## **Reflection on the Theme “For the Life of the World”**

The theme for this year’s All-American Council is: “*For The Life Of The World*”. On our seminary website, one portion is dedicated to “For the World and its Salvation”. This area reflects the many efforts made by faculty members, our mission choir, and other seminary constituencies to reach out into our church today, to offer educational programs, retreats, and other meaningful offerings to our greater Orthodox community. For us this is an important contribution, beyond the formation of future pastors, that at once serves to connect the work of the seminary with the greater church, and to bring feedback about what is happening in our greater church to enfold in the seminary’s pastoral formation program.

From 2002-2016, 192 students have graduated from the Seminary’s Master of Divinity Program. Alumni data shows that 157 of these graduates (81.7%) have gone on to serve the Church in a significant ministry capacity. This is reflective of the strength of the pastoral formation program the seminary currently offers, contributing directly to the life of the Church! Our continuing goal is to further enhance the strengths of our formation process to more fully equip future pastors to share Christ’s love with those who are suffering and struggling, and meaningfully serve as shepherds, and in other roles, amidst the growing complexities surrounding parish and community life. One of the realities of the past few years’ incoming classes is that the number of students enrolling as married students with families is significantly increasing, placing additional pressure on housing and financial support.

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

*Programs of Study:* At the present time, St. Tikhon’s Seminary offers the following program to those who wish to deepen their pursuit of theological knowledge:

A 3-year **Master of Divinity** (M.Div.) program is offered to graduates of North American accredited colleges, universities, or seminaries, who either have a baccalaureate degree (B.A., B.S., etc.), or who may wish to fulfill the baccalaureate equivalency requirement through articulated transfer of credit from an accredited two or four year college, university, or seminary.

The diaconal training program is currently operational as a certificate program, but presently does not have sufficient enrollment to be running.

Each year in the months of September and October, as part of its community outreach, St. Tikhon’s conducts an annual **Adult Education Lecture Series** for those residing within traveling distance of the school, providing members of the wider community a rich opportunity to explore topics of contemporary theological and ecclesiastical significance. Continuing Education Units (CEU) are offered to interested registrants.

For a number of years now, St. Tikhon's has also offered a weeklong **Clergy Continuing Education Program** in June. This offers another important opportunity for continuing education, fellowship, and renewal through monastery community services for a week in mid-June. Like the fall lecture series, this program is approved for continuing education credit for clergy!

In order to better enable students to fulfill particular requirements of their academic programs, the Seminary maintains articulation agreements and consortial arrangements with a number of institutions of higher education. Students who may wish to pursue academic options offered by such arrangements would normally consult in advance with the Registrar and Dean to explore the possibilities offered. Most recently St. Tikhon's has been building up the field education program with Clinical Pastoral Education.

*Institutional Relationships:* Apart from articulated agreements and consortial arrangements with other institutions of higher education and accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the Seminary holds institutional memberships in the Association of Theological Field Education (ATFE), the American Theological Library Association (ATLA), and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Theological Library Association (SEPTLA), the nation's largest theological library consortium. Through the libraries of SEPTLA, in particular, Seminary students and faculty enjoy direct access to more than 2 million volumes of books and periodical literature in the various theological and related disciplines. The seminary also holds accreditation by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) through a satellite agreement.

The seminary was reaccredited for seven years with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) following a site visit in November 2016. This is the strongest reaccreditation review of the seminary to date.

*Demographics:* The community of faith, theological inquiry, and learning at St. Tikhon's is comprised of both students and faculty. Students are the primary constituency served by the school's programs and curriculum. In the past several years, the seminary has experienced significant growth of its student population. Currently, a total of 32 matriculated students, and several auditors are enrolled in the Seminary's program of theological education.

*Registration Figures:*

Year *	Total Reg **	Married	OCA
2014-15	33	16	23
2015-16	23 (1)	9	14
2016-17	28 (1)	18	20
2017-18	31 (1)	23	22

\* Registered Students as of the beginning of the academic year in MDiv only.

\*\* Parentheses indicate one-year in residence program participants per Holy Synod directive.

*Resources and Operating Budget:* As the Church labors for the extension of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth through the best use of time, talent, and treasure by the People of God, so too, the Seminary labors to achieve its purpose and fulfill its mission through good stewardship of human, financial, physical, and institutional resources. Denominational seminaries in the United States are run on tight budgets. St. Tikhon’s is no exception, continuing to seek operational funding without the former annual appeal income from the greater church. The past fiscal years represented here reveal a closer relationship between budget and actual income than represented in the report for the last All-American Council. The seminary remains, however, highly dependent on donor contributions. It is important that our greater church give significant consideration to more substantive financial support of the seminaries as a direct investment toward our Church’s future. We remain realistically hopeful, through initiatives already underway, to continue to at least maintain if not grow the educational and formational quality of the seminary in the coming years.

Year	Annual Budget	Annual Income
2014-2015	<b>\$1,251,457</b>	<b>\$1,521,725</b>
2015-2016	<b>\$1,283,292</b>	<b>\$1,588,354</b>
2016-2017	<b>\$1,388,292</b>	<b>\$1,345,230</b>

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

Ways in which we have strengthened the seminary for service “*for the life of the world*” during the past few years includes:

1. Liturgical Music initiatives through our Mission Choir and the Patriarch Tikhon Choir
2. Aggressive work to move the married student housing project forward
3. Offering educational opportunities such as fall lecture series and continuing clergy education, as well as the diaconal formation program
4. Regular updates on seminary life with Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council
5. Successfully reaccredit the seminary with the Association of Theological Schools (2016)

Ways in which we seek to continue strengthening the seminary during next three years:

1. Build further on our already strong field education program
2. Aggressively work to complete our married student housing project

3. Explore establishing other programs and responses to aid in meeting needs of our church today
4. Continue to foster strong and health interdependence between seminary and monastery communities
5. Strengthen our curriculum at all levels through direct evaluation and assessment

## **Conclusion**

Though the challenges and transitions of the past several years have been significant, St. Tikhon's Seminary remains committed to the formation of priests and others who desire to serve the Holy Orthodox Church as we prepare to celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this fall. With the strong relationship of the seminary and monastery communities, St. Tikhon's Seminary prayerfully and actively supports the current effort to significantly contribute to the church here and abroad, and is proactively working to be positioned as both a resource and partner in our collective effort to embrace and advance the mission of our Orthodox Church in America. St. Tikhon understood the importance of the clergy being: "missionaries in America and for America." Further points of his mission included: *"It was to be a Church that maintained diversity in unity, ministering to "our people," but at the same time open to the world, with a mission to wider society, in which all – clergy and laity – were called to participate in responsible ways."* May God continue to bless our efforts to manifest the local church of the New Testament here in the American context for today and tomorrow!

## **F. St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary**

### **Mandate**

St. Vladimir's was founded to be both a missionary seminary bringing Orthodoxy to North America and an academy to train an educated clergy and laity to serve the Church in an educated society. This year marks the eightieth year of service in this tradition.

### **Membership**

*Professors:* Dr. John Barnet, in New Testament; V. Rev. Dr. John Behr, in Patristics; Dr. Peter Bouteneff, in Systematic Theology; V. Rev. Dr. Sergius Halvorsen, in Homiletics and Rhetoric; V. Rev. Dr. Chad Hatfield, in Missiology; V. Rev. Dr. Alexander Rentel, in Canon Law and Byzantine Studies

*Lecturers:* V. Rev. Vladimir Aleandro, in Liturgics; Rev. Nicholas Belcher, in Liturgics; Mat. Robin Freeman, in Choral Conducting; Rev. Dn. John El Massih, in Liturgical Music; Mr. Harrison Russin, in Liturgical Music; V Rev Dr. Eric G. Tosi in Parish Internship and Liturgics

Sessional Faculty: Rev. Adrian Budica, in Clinical Pastoral Education; Rev. Dr. Varghese Daniel, in Malankara Studies; Rev. Dr. Harry Pappas, in Scripture; Rev. Dr. George Parsenios, in New Testament; Rev. Dr. Eugen Pentiu, in Scripture and Semitic Languages; Rev. Dr. Anthony Roeber, in Church History; Prof. Richard Schneider, in Hermeneutics and Liturgical Art;

*D.Min. Faculty:* Rev. Dr. Gregory Edwards, in Missiology; Dr. Daniel Hinshaw, in Palliative Care; Dr. Jane Hinshaw, in Psychiatry; V. Rev. Dr. John Jillions, in Religion and Culture; V. Rev. Dr. Joseph Purpura, in Youth Ministry (*On Adm. Leave*); V. Rev. Dr. Nicholas Solak, in Pastoral Theology; Dr. Grant White, in Liturgical Theology; Dr. Gayle Woloschak, in Bioethics.

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

Since the last All-American Council, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary has undertaken an exploratory Capital Campaign that did not move forward, as it was clear that we needed to first address debt (\$2.2M from Lakeside Married Student Housing), rebuild our endowment, and achieve a balanced budget with a stronger annual fund.

To meet these goals, a three-year business model with a disciplined plan of action was formulated and adopted by the Board of Trustees. It is working. Evidence of this progress can be seen in the posted financials and recent annual reports, and it should be noted that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) lifted its notation, which had expressed financial concern about the Seminary, in February 2018. It should also be noted that SVOTS has now received clean external audits for fifty-five years.

In addition to the adoption of the business plan, a new governance model was instituted that is in keeping with the majority of ATS models. This model consists of a President with four direct reports that include the Academic Dean, CFO, COO, and Director of Institutional Advancement. The President (Archpriest Chad Hatfield) uses these four key members of the leadership team along with the Chapel Ecclesiarch and Dean of Residential Life to form the "President's Advisory Council."

A Master Plan for improving the buildings and grounds on our Crestwood/Yonkers Campus is now in place, and improvements have begun. The plan will be expanded as we move forward with our institutional assessment and strategic planning and as we near the 2020 reaccreditation visit by ATS. The Seminary is also exploring the idea of being accredited through Middle States.

This year has also seen us continue our long-standing tradition of being strongly Pan-Orthodox. Our student body represents twenty-two jurisdictions and seventeen countries. Oriental Orthodox seminarians, mostly American-born, are able to worship in their own chapels (Malankara and Coptic), and the now fifty-year-old cooperative with St. Nersess Armenian Seminary continues.

In the years since the last AAC, the seminary has graduated seventy-two students in four degree programs including thirty-four Master of Divinity, twenty-five Master of Arts, ten Master of Theology, and three Doctor of Ministry students. Of these, eighteen were



ordained by the time of graduation and many more have been ordained post-graduation. Eleven graduates were women.

SVOTS contributes to the OCA's required Continuing Education Units by offering the Doctor of Ministry (D. Min.) degree. We are preparing to form the 2021 Cohort, which will become the third cohort of students since the D.Min. program was revived as a hybrid program in 2014. In January at the Fr Alexander Schmemmann Lecture and Academic Convocation, there were three doctoral degrees awarded to members of the first cohort. Their work has been featured in a series of public webinars. The 2019 D.Min. Cohort is completing coursework this summer and will soon begin work on their D.Min. Projects, which will focus on concrete challenges in the practice of ministry. Over twenty men and women including priests, deacons, youth ministers, chaplains, and full-time missionaries have been part of this doctoral program.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) has been fully integrated into our core programs, and we are also looking to create a CPE-based parish field work component. Prison Ministry falls under this umbrella as well.

The Sacred Arts Institute continues to expand offerings in both music and the visual arts sponsoring the following events:

1. November 2015 Luce grant for \$250k awarded for sacred arts initiative.
2. September 2016 first of two symposiums for a dozen international scholars and artists on the "sacred" within sacred arts.
3. Launching [sacredartsinitiative.com](http://sacredartsinitiative.com) website with news and interviews.
4. February 2017 Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir performs all-Arvo Pärt repertoire in Coproduction with Church of St Ignatius Loyola, New York, to a sell-out audience of 800.
5. May 2017 international Conference on Arvo Pärt: Sounding the Sacred. Metropolitan Tikhon delivers opening address.
6. May 2017 Krista Tippett lectures at SVS drawing an entirely new audience to campus.
7. May 2018 second international symposium on the sacred.
8. Other events were not under the Luce grant, such as CD recordings, Orthodox Masterpieces honoring Mitred Archpriest Sergei Glagolev.

SVS Press remains the lone non-subsidized press among ATS Seminaries that generates profit. Since the last AAC, the Press has produced:

1. 62 new books;

2. 39 short-run digital books;
3. 75 books in digital format; and
4. 1 new CD; and
5. 24 new publications in process

### **Plans, Initiatives and Projects for the Future**

Looking to the future, the seminary is now engaged in what we are calling “Vision 2020: Committing to Residency in an Online World but Opening the Door for Hybrid/Online Programs.” This is much more than a curriculum revision. This is a total reimagining of residential life. We expect the residential community experience to be such a positive one that our graduates will become our best advocates as to why the sacrifice should be made to live in community in Orthodox Christian theological education and formation.

Adjustments are being made to the number of required credits as we build a better balance between excellence in academics and the very best in pastoral integration and practice. The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) track will include concentrations in areas such as parish ministry, ethics, apologetics, missions/evangelism, and music, among others.

There will now be a midday meeting that will include lunch for single and married students who will be joined by faculty and staff for daily fellowship involving the entire Seminary community. There will no longer be night classes offered in order to provide both additional study and family time and to accommodate music rehearsals, student interest groups, town halls, etc.

Spiritual formation and cohort groups will also become normative at SVOTS, and the St. Juliana Society for future clergy wives will continue.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, it should be noted that our OCA missions, parishes, and dioceses can do several things to participate in our common mission. They include a) praying for vocations and active recruitment for men to serve in the priesthood, b) becoming a parish or mission supporting a seminary of your choice with 1% of your annual budget, and c) participating in our SVOTS Tuition Initiative to insure graduates are tuition debt-free.

## **3. Metropolitan Council**

### **A. Metropolitan Council Report**

#### **Mandate**

The Metropolitan Council is the permanent executive body of the Church administration which exists for the purpose of implementing the decisions of the All-American Council and continues the work of the Council between its sessions. The Metropolitan serves as the chairman of the Council. (Statute of the OCA Article V, Section 1)

## **Membership**

According to the Statute of the OCA (Article V, Section 2) “The Metropolitan Council shall consist of:

- a. The Metropolitan;
- b. The Chancellor, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of The Orthodox Church in America, ex officio;
- c. Two representatives from each Diocese, one priest or deacon and one layperson, elected by the Diocesan Assembly unless otherwise provided for by Diocesan Bylaws; and
- d. Six (6) members elected at-large by the All-American Council, three priests or deacons and three laypersons.”

This report contains the collect thoughts of the At-large members of the Metropolitan Council that include the following:

Archpriest Chad Hatfield & Maureen Jury elected for six-year terms at the 16<sup>th</sup> AAC.

Archpriest Antonio Perdomo & Kitty Vitko elected for six-years terms at the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC.

## **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

There is a general consensus among us that the need for evangelization and church growth is critical to addresses the many concerns and challenges now being faced by the OCA. As we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America we must, in all humility, re-focus our attention on what our autocephaly means for the future of Orthodoxy America. Why has so little progress been made towards a united Orthodoxy in North America?

In the last three years a 1M\$ endowment for mission and evangelism was received through a bequest. Three Mission Schools have been conducted using these funds. The MC is now in the process of re-evaluating how to best use this endowment for the purpose of evangelism.

Much credit is given to our Treasurer, Melanie Ringa for overseeing a clear correction to the OCA’s financial difficulties with transparency and accountability now being central to the report on our financial situation. We have come a long way towards a goal of balanced budgets. But, our financial statements also so us how far we have to go to find the path to fully funding the OCA and her various departments and ministries. We are an aging church and with our membership decreasing this accentuates our need for evangelism. Church Growth and Finances are tied together.

SOCA is the reintroduction of a proper Stewardship Program. Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak is charged with moving the new stewardship effort but unfortunately he has other time consuming jobs that make a full-court press on stewardship impossible at the moment. A quote from a report to the Archdiocese of Washington DC sums up the situation as follows:

*“Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak gave a presentation on SOCA (Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America). We were reminded that the work of the church is severely hampered by the decrease income, created by the move to percentage giving. There is NO question this is the spiritual way to fund the church. However, the expectation is that the work of the departments (such as evangelization) and special projects would be funded by free will offerings to SOCA. A basic membership is only \$300 a year. Participation by all our parishes was highly endorsed by the Metropolitan.”*

For several of our semi-annual meetings the Metropolitan Council has heard about and contributed to the “Four Pillars” as envisioned by His Beatitude. This process has been an important part of the work of the MC over the last three years and soon the implementation of these Four Pillars will set the course for some strategic planning for the OCA.

Presentations by two of the various departments of the OCA have been both informative and a source of enthusiasm for the members of the MC. Interaction with the department chairs has also helped in prioritizing goals for the MC and the departments.

The Internal Governance Committee has continued to present retreats on themes that benefit the work of the MC. These include “Conflict Management”, “Stewardship”, “Leadership” and presentations by faculty from SVOTS & STOTS. The most recent one was to prepare us for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Autocephaly.

The MC has been meeting at the Immaculate Conception Seminary/Retreat Center near the OCA Chancery. This venue provides with a meals and meeting space at a very competitive rate.

Two final areas of concentration have been on the maintenance of the physical plant for the Chancery. The renovations of the building are constant and the major step forward has been the new space for the valuable OCA Archives.

## **B. Internal Auditors’ Report**

### **Mandate**

The Audit Committee of the Orthodox Church in America has as its mission to: Audit all accounts of the Orthodox Church in America on a semiannual basis and review the audited accounts of all stavropegial institutions on an annual basis and to report same to the Metropolitan Council.

### **Membership**

Reader John Skrobat, *Chair*, Matushka Theodora Blom, *member*, Subdeacon Dmitri Pletz, *member*

### **Initiatives and Projects Since the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council**

The primary purpose of the Audit committee is the assessment of the operations within the Chancery proper, as it concerns the accounting and fiscal systems and reports issued to various bodies and committees within the Church.

Having been nominated for positions on the Committee, formally elected by the Metropolitan Council and approved by the Holy Synod of Bishops, the current members of the Committee visited the Chancery in the summers of 2016 and 2017.

We have reviewed the accounting records as well as source documents and found a few minor issues that were immediately resolved by the Treasurer. These issues did not affect the financial reports issued by the Treasurer.

In short, we found the policies, procedures and documentation of the OCA Chancery accounts to be in good order, with some minor and immaterial exceptions listed below:

1. Petty cash accounts should be reconciled monthly
2. Medical insurance reimbursements should be reconciled at year end
3. Depreciation schedules should be updated for the 2018 budget

While the Statute directs the Committee to visit the Chancery on a semi-annual basis, we concur with the previous Audit Committee that semi-annual visits would be superfluous and not cost effective. We have continued the established practice of annual visits, which will also take place in the summer of 2018.

We also continued the procedures established by the previous Committee regarding Stavropegial institutions. We reviewed externally audited and unaudited financial statements for each and elected to rely on these reports rather than making costly site visits.

Our review of the financials available for St. Catherine's Representation Church in Moscow, Russia and discussions with our OCA Treasurer evoked a number of questions and revealed inconsistencies. We have recommended more thorough review by qualified persons.

The Committee has recommended a statute change to clarify the frequency and scope of work to be conducted at the Chancery and Stavropegial institutions.