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Special Assembly of the Diocese of New England Sale of the Diocesan Residence in Cumberland RI

The Special Assembly of the Diocese of New England of the Orthodox Church in America convened at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, New Britain, CT on May 21, 2008 for the purpose of addressing the recommendation of the Diocesan Council to sell the Diocesan Residence in Cumberland, RI. His Grace, Bishop NIKON

opened the Special Assembly at 7:00 p.m. with the singing of "Christ is Risen." There were a total of 46 attendees: 44 voting members and 2 non-voting attendees.

Greg Shesko, Chairman of the Diocesan Residence Committee, distributed photos of the Diocesan Residence, and he gave a brief history of the resi-

dence.

- 1988 Purchased for Bishop JOB of Hartford.
- 1993 Rented by Fr. Vasily Lickwar, rector of Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Cumberland, RI.
- 2007 In November the Lickwar's move out of the residence having purchased their own home.

Assembly to 3

ONE Stewards

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!
Please join ONE Stewards in our work of spreading the Gospel in New England. Our budget this year is to contribute \$20,000 to the following diocesan ministries:
\$7,500 to Youth Rally,
\$6,000 to Missions,

\$3,000 to Scholarships,
\$3,500 to Charities

We still need to raise \$6,000 to meet our \$20,000 goal for 2008. Enclosed in this issue of Orthodox New England is an ONE Stewards envelope. Help us achieve our goal for the year by donating generously.

Diocesan Seminarian Profile

JUSTIN DUMOULIN

Justin and Anna DuMoulin, together with their two-year-old daughter Nika, have completed one year at St. Vladimir's Seminary. Last fall they left their home parish, Holy Resurrection, in Claremont, New Hampshire and

began the first of three years at St. Vladimir's where Justin hopes to complete his Masters of Divinity. Anna, an artist and aspiring iconographer, and Justin, who worked for three years building barns and houses before coming

to seminary, made the transition to Crestwood NY with as much fluidity as possible. Anna transported her small icon studio to their seminary apartment and she continues to

Seminarian to 2

...daily services, homilies, and thoughtful reflections by professors, bring much of what is said in the classroom into focus.



Justin reading in SVS Three Hierarchs Chapel during Great and Holy Saturday liturgy.



Justin, Anna, and Nika DuMoulin at Holy Resurrection church in Claremont, NH

Seminarian from 1

paint while pursuing a master's degree in fine art. Justin maintains wood-working and carving, doing small jobs for the seminary and he builds during the winter and summer breaks.

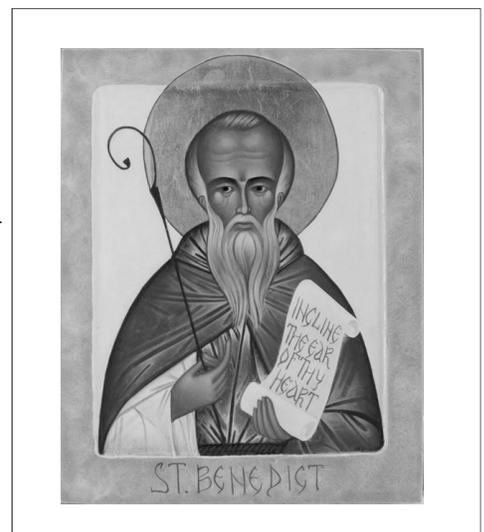
As a young couple they are not entirely tied down or in major debt, and this move to seminary seemed logical. As Anna said, "We really didn't have any other place to go to that made sense! Everything just seemed to fit, and point in that direction. We figured it was a once in a lifetime opportunity and we'd better not miss it." One advantage the DuMoulin's have is that they didn't cross the country to come to seminary. They are three and a half hours drive from New Hampshire and their home parish, where Anna's father is the Rector. The connection with St. Vladimir's is a generational one, as Anna's father studied there under Father Alexander Schmemmann, and in many respects they think it feels a lot like home. Their move to campus was not a com-

plete uprooting. Justin, though being himself a fairly new convert to Orthodoxy, and having married into a clergy family, has gotten used to the necessary work that the priest and his family must do to make church happen, but nevertheless the daily life at the school was a shocker to him in more than one way. Justin recalls the first days at seminary when Father Tom Hopko spoke to the incoming class, telling them they will want to quit, but don't do it, that the past is over and they are here now and that is God's will. "It was a bit scary...I remember asking, what did I get myself into?" Justin says they told the incoming class that in order to learn theology, one must suffer a bit. "It seems like the first semester is testing that axiom, because a lot of seminarians bring with them a passion for some aspect of Church study,

whether it's Russian History, Dogmatics, or Syriac studies- whatever, and you soon realize that it all has to be brought into focus, but that doesn't come easy, because you want everyone to care about what you care about!"

Justin says that the daily services, homilies, and thoughtful reflections by professors, bring much of what is said in the classroom into focus. "We hear a lot about "first principles" and what that is becomes evident over time, but the information keeps coming and you have to deal with it... that is where Chapel is so vital to the learning process, it is a constant straight edge." Although there were rough moments and some hardships for them, they think of the coming years with anticipation. Being at seminary and all that goes with it is a special gift. One that will keep with them and nourish them even when they leave. "I've learned a lot about myself and about other people," Anna says,

Seminarian to 3



A copy of this icon by Anna was donated to SVS

Seminarian from 2

“and I love that our daughter will have had this special experience of growing up at SVS.”

Although still unsure as to their future vocation, both seem confident that wherever their path will lead, they will be equipped by the grace of God with the important tools of knowledge, experience, and the new friendships that St. Vlad's has given them. They send grateful thanks to everyone who has helped them financially, and spiritually.



Nika and Justin on the Chapel steps.

Assembly from 1

Greg Shesko met with three Real Estate Agents who have looked at the house and they agree that the selling price for the house should be no greater than the assessed value of \$270,000. Also there is consensus that no ‘major renovations’ should be undertaken by the diocese because it would not be able to recoup the expense at the time of sale. Only minor exterior repairs were recommended. The buyer

would have to spend \$30 to \$50 thousand to bring the house up to adequate living standards.

The Diocesan Council has spent approximately \$10,000 to get the exterior up to presentable conditions; cleaning, repairs, painting, etc.

Greg Shesko presented the following motion, second by Fr. Dennis Rhodes:

The Special Diocesan Assembly approves the Diocesan Council's recommendation of February 20,

2008 to sell the Diocesan Residence at 6 New Clark Road, Cumberland, RI. The Council is authorized to contract with a local realtor to put the property on the market, to negotiate its sale at the best possible price and to undertake all necessary legal arrangements to conclude the transaction.

Fr. John Kreta asked for discussion and there was none. He asked for a vote on the motion and it passed unanimously.

WHY DO WE FAST?

Rev. Paul Coats

By faith Moses, . . . considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward. (Heb. 11:26)

. . . let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the

cross . . . (Heb. 12:1-2)

The Church gives us several fasting seasons throughout the year: Great Lent, the Apostles Fast, the Dormition Fast and the Advent Fast. Additionally, there is the ongoing Wednesday and Friday fasting. But why do we fast? Why do we have these seasons?

When you fast, do you ever feel sorely challenged, irritated and impatient; annoyed with the lack of food? Sometimes the fasting experience seems *negative*. “Why do I put myself through this?” I sometimes ask. What keeps us fasting, attending services, observing a

Why do we fast? to 6

PARISH NEWS

All Saints Orthodox Church, Hartford, CT

Submitted by Rev. William DuBovik

The walls of All Saints Church in Hartford continue to come alive through the masterful work of Victor Kazanin, a Russian iconographer who now resides in California, and the generosity of parishioners.

Victor, who a few years ago painted iconographic frescoes in the apse of the Church, returned to apply his talents to the walls adjacent to the iconostasis. This phase of the iconography project includes depictions of St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil the Great, and the Annunciation.

Watching Victor was inspiring in itself, as with nothing more than a pencil and the immense gift of artistic talent from God, he constructed the new works. Preparing special pigments with materials from throughout the world, he then set about bringing the depictions alive with color. Now St. John and Basil overlook the sanctuary and are visually present to worshippers who celebrate the liturgies of these two saints. And above them, the angel

Gabriel brings the good news of the coming incarnation to our Holy Mother.

Phase II was a gift from parishioner George Bugai who contributed in memory of his wife Helen and members of the Kudrowski family. Many Years and Memory Eternal are extended. We look forward to the visit of His Grace Bishop NIKON Nov. 30, when he will bless the new



All Saints Church, Hartford CT

works.

Inspired by the beautiful work that has been done, donors for Phase III of the iconography are coming forward. The next phase will include depictions of 10 saints in individual circles below the apse, and the painting and decoration of the rest of the sanctuary. Also planned is an

icon of "Christ Not Painted by Human Hands," which will be on the front of the choir loft, an inspiring and uplifting view from the sanctuary and as persons exit the Church.

In addition to worship services and special appointment, there will be two other opportunities for the public to view the new icons. On Aug. 23, the Church will sponsor a renewed Scarborough Fair Flea Market along with a Mini-Carnival. Then, one of the big events of the year, the 35th Annual Russia Tea Room and Bazaar will be held Nov. 8 and 9, with some new attractions and always great food.

Meanwhile, our FOCA-R Club is busy at work as it will host, in conjunction with the parish, the FOCA National Convention during the Labor Day weekend of 2009. It promises to be an eventful few days, with opportunities for Orthodox to come together socially, as well as for the work of the FOCA, and enjoy some of the attractions of the Greater Hartford region.



New icon of Christ for the Iconostasis at Holy Trinity Church.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Willimantic CT



On September 14, 2008 Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Willimantic CT will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the Church at present location. The church

was consecrated on Sept 13 by Metropolitan LEONTY in 1958. During this celebration, the parish will dedicate

Icons to 5

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, New Britain, CT

Submitted by Evelyn Cherpak

The Sisterhood of the Protection of the Theotokos sponsored a brunch on June 15, Pentecost and Father's Day, to honor both grads and Dads and to celebrate our church's name day. Our graduates include Megan Bartos, who received a B.S. in Occupational Therapy from the University of New England, Biddeford, ME, Christopher Dresko, our

former choir director, who received a Master's Degree in Music from



Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, New Britain CT

Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY, and Christian Burrill who received an MBA from the University of Connecticut. Congratulations to all for

their achievements.

On July 6th, the parish bid farewell to Very Reverend John Dresko who served Holy Trinity for sixteen years, from 1989-2005. For the last two years he held positions in development and funding raising with the OCA and at Mary Wade Home, New Haven, CT. His new assignment is as rector of St. Paul's Church, Las Vegas, Nevada. We wish him success and many years in the vineyard of the Lord.

On July 6th, the parish bid farewell to Very Reverend John Dresko who served Holy Trinity for sixteen years, from 1989-2005.

Icons from 4

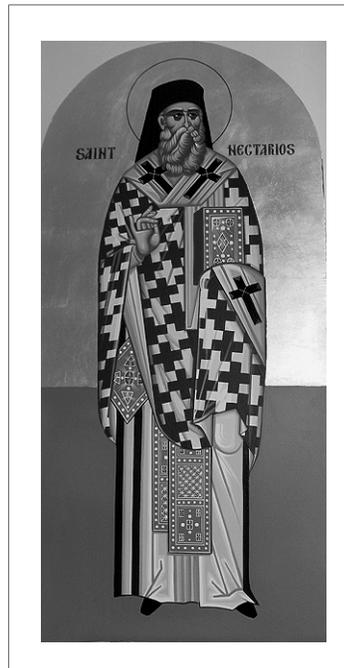
their new iconostasis.

The icons in the church were 50 years old, and were greatly in need of

replacement. Over the past few months packages have been arriving from Sophia Bulgaria containing both hand painted icons and the carved wood iconostasis. Master Iconographer Mr George Goutsev and Master Wood Carver Mr Peter Nedkov, both of Sofia, Bulgaria worked jointly to create the new iconostasis. The community of Holy Trinity is extremely grateful for this opportunity to beautify the Lord's house.



Master Wood Carver Mr Peter Nedkov with the new Royal Doors



St. Nektarios of Aegina



we have to go outside of ourselves, outside the "house" of our comforts and dependencies

Our reward may not be immediate, but there will be a reward.

Why do we fast? from 3

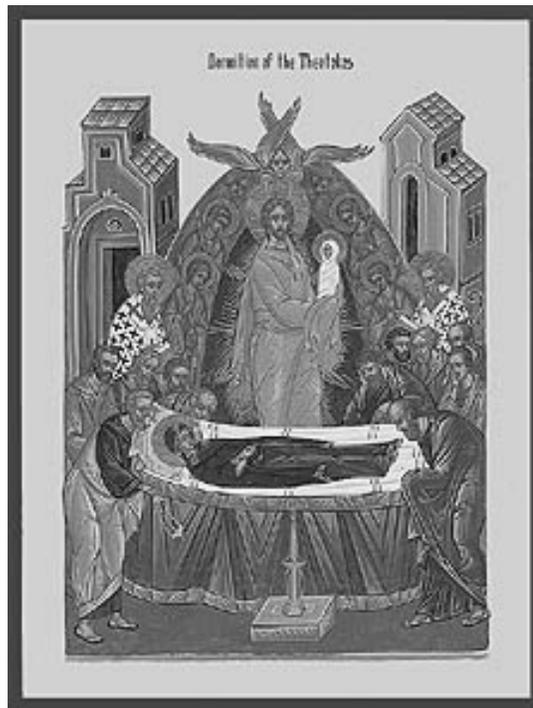
daily rule of prayer and following the ascetical practices of the Church?

As I was growing up in rural Northern Illinois, my friends and I used to love to go camping. The kind of camping we did was not state park camping. No, our favorite spots were in pastures where cows would graze, perhaps beside a creek that wound its way between cornfields, or near a stand of timber on the back acreage of a farm. We'd get permission from the farmer, usually someone who knew who we were or belonged to our church, and we'd load the car with all the necessary stuff to spend a night outdoors. Food and utensils were boxed up; water was put in coolers; sleeping bags and bug spray were rounded up. We'd also throw in our tents, plastic to put on the ground, pillows, flashlights, and all the stuff needed to start a fire and keep it going. We'd drive as close as we could to the camping spot and then haul all that stuff by hand the rest of the way. It was a lot of work! Then we'd sleep on the ground, fight the bugs, get smoke in our eyes, wake up damp and

unrested . . . only to pack everything up again and haul it away.

Why did we do all this?

We did it for the reward of immersing ourselves in the beauty of our natural world: to sit among the greenery of summer; to gaze on a pastel sky at dusk; to feel the coolness of night on our backs and the warmth of a campfire



Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary

Icon courtesy of www.oca.org

on our faces. We did it to hear the sound of the locusts, watch the moon rise, see the stars come out, and sleep to the sound of the wind in the trees. And we did it to experience the joy of each other, in stories and laughter, or quiet conversations, and the satisfaction of undivided attention.

In other words, we did it

to experience a reality different from the insulating comfort of our homes.

This is why we fast and participate in the ascetical disciplines of the Church: we do it for the reward! What is the reward? All the benefits of drawing nearer to Christ. In Him is true joy, true peace, true relationship and communion. There's a way to get to

these things, but we have to go outside of ourselves, outside the "house" of our comforts and dependencies. By allowing the efforts of fasting, prayer and almsgiving to lead us to repentance, we get to experience something of *real life* in Christ, which holds much more than the world of our fleshly existence. The reward may not be immediate, but there *will* be a reward. And on many levels we experience that reward even now.

We should not be ashamed of seeking the reward that comes with ascetical effort. Christ himself sought to motivate his followers by the rewards of the Kingdom of heaven. In

the sixth chapter of the gospel of Matthew He commands us to observe what have become the three primary ascetical disciplines the Christian life: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. For each, He promises rewards:

But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms

may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:3-4)

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:6)

But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:17-18)

Christ Himself endured the cross "for the joy that was set before him." (Heb. 12:2) He endured the cross because he loved us, but this is not in opposition to the reward of joy that is communion with God the

Father and with us, for which He endured the suffering. If Christ was motivated by joy, so should we be.

Fasting is a "get to," not a "have to." It is an opportunity not an obligation. I can stuff myself with food, and it doesn't give me true life; but I can refrain from food in prayer, and begin to experience the Bread from heaven, Jesus Christ.

So if you ask yourself why we observe the ascetical discipline the Church, the answer is simple: for the joy of knowing Christ. Not because we "ought" to, not because we normally eat too much, not because we need to be a better person, or more virtuous . . . and not because we must suffer with Christ. All these things may be true, but they do not truly moti-

vate us in our Christian journey. Our goal is Christ. We gladly undertake the ascetical effort because Christ is our goal, and because of the inherent joy of knowing Him. Christ means *true* joy, *true* peace, and *true* communion with my Creator, and with others. I want to experience these things. But I must leave the "house" of my physical comforts to do it.

For the joy that is set before us, let us continue to seek Christ in all seasons, and greet Him in the joy of His Resurrection!

Fr. Paul Coats graduated from St. Vladimir's Seminary in May 2008. His parish assignment was at Christ the Savior Church in Southbury CT.

If Christ was motivated by joy, so should we be.

Evangelization and Revitalization

Natural Church Development: Part 1

Rev. J. Sergius Halvorsen

When a parish is in decline, the most common response is to focus on the most obvious problems. "Membership is in decline. The facilities are old and in need of serious repair. Every year we face a budget deficit." However, efforts directed at "fixing" these problems almost always lead to more trouble. Fingers are pointed, accusations are made, tempers flare, feelings are hurt, and the parish moves further into crisis. Does this sound familiar? The problem with this approach is that it addresses secondary symptoms instead of confronting the underlying problem.

Parishes fall into decline when there are obstacles to the working of God's grace in the community. The goal of Natural Church Development is to allow God's grace to transform and enliven the parish community. Since it is God who brings health and growth, there is nothing that we can do to "make" the Church grow. We are no more able to "make" the Church grow than we are able to "make" a seed sprout. If we want to grow a plant, we prepare the soil, plant the seed, water the soil, ensure that it gets the right amount of sunlight, fertilize it properly and protect it from para-

sites. As important as these actions are to the ultimate growth of the plant, we are always powerless to "make" it grow. We did not make the seed, God did, and we do not cause it to grow. We simply work in harmony with God's will which is to bring forth life. Conversely, if we neglect the seedling, if we smash it or poison its water, it will surely die. It is the same for the Church. God desires nothing more than the salvation of all people, though the saving work of Christ's Holy Church. But, it is possible

Evangelization to 8

It is God's Holy Church and He is the only one who can cause it to grow.

O.N.E.

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Evangelization from 7
for our own sin and dysfunction to impede the work of Christ. However, when we actively work with God (*synergia*) in the parish, the power of God's grace will naturally bring about parish health and from that health, growth follows. God is always ready to act. The question is whether or not we are willing to allow Him to work in our lives and our par-

ishes.

The fundamental question, therefore, when considering evangelization and revitalization is parish health. When a parish is healthy, then people who come to the Church looking for truth and life will naturally be drawn to a community that is filled with joy and enlivened by Christ. Natural Church Development (NCD) is an approach to parish life that

allows parishes to accurately diagnose the weaknesses in the community and move towards healing and renewal.

The Committee on Evangelization and Revitalization has been working with NCD and assessing its potential for the diocese. In coming issues of ONE, NCD will be discussed in greater detail, along with ideas for its implementation in the diocese.

Upcoming Events

- Town Hall Meeting All Saints Church, Hartford CT 7-10 PM, July 23 2008
- Youth Rally 2008 August 11-16 2008. For further information contact Fr. John Hopko saintcyril@snet.net
- Town Hall Meeting August 21, 2008 Holy Trinity Cathedral Boston MA 6-9 PM
- Diocesan Council Meeting New Britain August 27, 2008
- Joint Meeting of Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council September 3-5
- Orthodox Education Day St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood NY, October 4, 2008
- Diocesan Assembly October 24-25 Cumberland RI
- 15th All American Council of the Orthodox Church in America Pittsburgh, PA, from November 10-13, 2008.