

Nativity Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because he first loved us. (1 John 4:18-19 RSV)

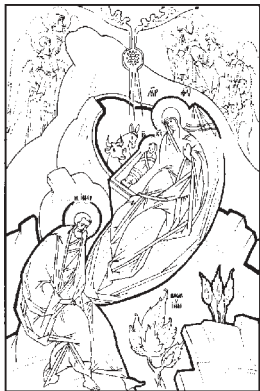
NATIVITY 2003

To the Reverend Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of New England

Dearly beloved,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

As we gather in celebration of the Incarnation in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called



to the same love that God exhibits in the act of giving His Son to us. The mystery of the Incarnation is so familiar to us that we almost forget the magnitude of the act: God has taken upon Himself human flesh. He empties Himself to take on the form of a servant for one reason alone – He loves us.

The Son of God made man has come to the world to cleanse it of the fear that comes from punishment. The Apostle John reminds us that “perfect love casts out fear.” Our relationship with God through His Son is one of adoption. We are called to become His heirs. To become what He is by the grace poured out upon all creation.

Our encounter with the new-born Christ is not an encounter filled with the fear of punishment and judgment. It is an encounter with love – a love which is manifested by a God who does not destroy a world engulfed in sin, but who redeems it in the self-sacrifice of His Son.

MESSAGE TO 2



Diocesan Assembly gathers in Terryville

The Diocese of New England gathered in assembly at Ss. Cyril and Methodius Church in Terryville, CT on October 24-25, 2003. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, locum tenens of the diocese, could not be present and asked His Grace, Bishop Nikon, to preside. The following is his report:

The Election

The Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America during a special assembly two weeks ago in NYC elected to submit my name to the Holy Synod of Bishops for canonical election as Bishop of Boston. The Holy Synod during this past week, confirmed this election. This does not change our relationship drastically.

As Bishop of Boston, I will continue to administer the diocese of New England, and the Metropolitan remains as Locum Tenens. I will be here for you and our communities and continue to visit the parishes in the NE diocese.

Visitations

Since my last report to you - along with the scheduled visitations to the parishes I was asked to fill in for the Metropolitan on several occasions.

Recently I filled in for him for the Elevation of the Holy Cross and attended Orthodox Education Day at St. Vladimir’s seminary. I also was

BISHOP’S REPORT TO 4



His Grace, Bishop Nikon, Lay Vice-Chair Cindy Voytovich, Chancellor Fr. Michael Westerberg, and Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Dennis Rhodes at the Diocesan Assembly in Terryville.

O.N.E. (ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND)

Diocese of New England, Orthodox Church in America
Published monthly except for July-August

His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, Administrator
The Very Reverend John J. Dresko, Editor

Advertising: This publication will accept advertisements. However, we reserve the right to refuse any advertising that we find unacceptable for a publication of this type. **Rate:** \$50.00 per quarter page, \$100.00 per half page, \$175.00 per full page.

Subscription: Distributed free of charge to diocesan members. \$10.00 per year or any part thereof for others. Subscription outside of U.S.: \$15.00 (U.S. Currency).

Editorial Office: V. REV. JOHN DRESKO, Editor
E-MAIL: jdresko@cox.net

FAX: (860) 620-0739
US MAIL: 95 Butternut Lane, Southington, CT 06489

ONE Online: <http://www.ocadne.org>

ONE STEWARDS: PO Box 2995, New Haven, CT 06515-2995

Hardware: This issue was composed on an Apple Power Macintosh G5 with 1.5 gb RAM, a Umax Astra 3450 scanner, and a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5MP laser printer. **Software:** Microsoft Word X & PageMaker 6.52. Reproduction done at GT Graphics, Forestville, CT.

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ON THE DOCKET

A listing of upcoming events in the Diocese.
Please forward any dates you wish to be included to the Editor.

December 3, 2003

Diocesan Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT

December 4, 2003

Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.
Holy Transfiguration Church, New Haven, CT

January 11, 2004

Yolka Benefit Dinner-Dance, 1:00 P.M.
at Greek Cultural Center
Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Springfield, MA

MESSAGE FROM 1

His sacrifice is shown not only through the Cross, but also through the Incarnation. He takes upon Himself everything that we are and goes everywhere we are – including the grave. He redeems us by taking that flesh which He assumes on this glorious day and taking it (and us) back to His Father.

The Apostle proclaims “we love because he has first loved us.” The gift of God to His creation is His Son. The gift of creation to God is the love which we retrun in emulation of the Son. The Virgin offers herself in love. The earth offers a cave. The wise men brings gifts. We offer ourselves. All because He first loves us enough to send His Son.

May the promise which is born on this bright and most marvelous Day inspire every single heart and soul to the same love which He gives to us first. God has come in the flesh not to inflict the fear of punishment upon us, but rather to convert our hearts to the same perfect love which He bestows upon us.

May the new-born Child bless each and every one of you, and I greet you in the joy of the Feast: Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

With love in the new-born Christ,

† HERMAN,
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada
Locum tenens of the Diocese of New England

O.N.E. Press Fund

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Around the Parishes

Ansonia, Connecticut

How quickly time flies! Already we're into the holiday season and the past few months were especially busy at Three Saints Church. In September, our Church School program got off to a great start led again by Matushka Jennifer Kruge and Bill Troester. Our teachers spend a little time each week producing interesting ways to teach the youth of our parish about God and scripture and using in our daily lives. The Church School students also sponsored their first "Chocolate Lover's Table" at our Annual Food & Craft Fair held on November 8, 2003. They were one of a few new things to be included in our annual fair, amongst our Tag Sale being held at the same time.

Our crafters and knitters are settling down for the cooler months preparing lap robes, caps and scarves to many different types of distribution-from local shut-ins to Alaska and Russia. Our Planning Committee has begun starting the process of remodeling our current church facility to accommodate handicapped persons. This has been a long awaited project and the committee-as well as

OUR DIOCESE

PEOPLE
PLACES
EVENTS

many others-have put alot of hard work into getting us this far. Over the next few years, we should see our goals becoming realities.

I'm sure we will stay busy during the winter months-and I will keep all posted on what's new! We wish you all a Blessed Nativity Season!!!

- submitted by Julie Craft

Clinton, Connecticut

An afternoon of fellowship was the focus of our annual summer picnic held at Clinton Beach on a beautiful August Sunday afternoon. The pavilion and sandy beach provided the wonderful setting for the youngest and oldest of the faithful at St. Alexis Mission.

As in the past a service of Preparation and Thanksgiving was celebrated to start the new church School year. This special service incorporated prayers said by the students, parents, teachers and parish community at large. Together the commitment was made to help the learning and teaching process, Enrollment this year is 29 students! The goal echos that of our national educational agenda of "no child left behind" with specific teaching and learning goals for each class. Adult Ed is held twice a month prior



(Front, L-R) In Clinton, newly-received Penkoff-Lidbeck family: Anastasia, Anastasia, Glenn Alexis, Kyra, Nadia, Fr. Steven Voytovich. (Back, L-R) Sponsors Liberty Page, Sue Davis, Christine Boyd, Jim Pepitone.

to Divine Liturgy.

On the afternoon of November 1st we were blessed to have the community come together to witness the reception and blessing of marriage of the Penkoff-Lidbeck family. It was truly a joy to welcome Glenn Alexis & Anastasia and their daughters Anastasia, Kyra and Nadia to our spiritual family at St. Alexis.

Work towards our consecration continues. The date has been set for May 8, 2004. Information will be sent out to the parishes during the first part of the year. Just delivered were the Table of Oblation and Gospel stand. Other work towards the completion of the church structure continues.

-submitted by Matushka Cindy Voytovich

Meriden, Connecticut

We at Ss. Peter and Paul have been busy since the beginning of fall. Our Brotherhood hosted a Breakfast Brunch to honor Edie Nichols and Mickey DeLuccia for their many years of service to our Parish. Edie has been a life long member of the Parish. She has be a member of the choir since she was a little child, only recently retiring. She has served as a Church School teacher, a Brownie leader, and Treasurer for the St. Mary's Sisterhood. She was also the first woman Governor of the FROC Atlantic District. She is presently a member of R.O.L.L. and the St. Vladimir's Foundation. Mickey has been a member of our Parish for many years. He was drafted to be Treasurer of the SS. Peter and Paul Brother soon after he arrived in Meriden and has also served as President for many years. He was instrumental in reviving the Brotherhood during its lean years. He served as Chairman of the Parish

PARISHES TO 10

BISHOP'S REPORT

present at a special prayer service for the United Nations community at Holy Trinity Cathedral in New York, after which I had dinner with the Albanian Ambassador to the UN.

My travels also included Founders Day at St. Tikhon's Monastery immediately following the Albanian Diocesan assembly.

In addition I have visited every parish in the Albanian Archdiocese except for Jamestown, NY and every parish in the Diocese of New England except Berlin, NH. Although I did have a chance to speak with the pastor from Berlin during the NE Youth Rally.

I have asked each pastor of both dioceses to meet with me during our respective assemblies to schedule my visitations for 2004.

One of the major aspects of my visitations, is the visible presence that our church is hierarchal. The bishops are responsible for their flocks and most importantly, the bishops serve as pastors to the pastors and their families. Without archpastoral care, the Church simply is not the Church. Where the bishop is – there too is the church. This is not an egotistical statement. It is simply our Orthodox Theology.



At the Diocesan Assembly liturgy, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, bestows Scouting awards upon (L-R), Alex Wegh, Thomas Hopko, Lucy Hopko, and Peter Hopko, all from the Terryville parish. (Photo: Macrina Hopko)

Further, when accepting our responsibility as a parish council member, we also promise to uphold the canons, rules and traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church.

I thoroughly enjoy my visitations, although they may be more than I can handle in certain aspects. Recently, while visiting Maynard, Fr. Robert is an excellent pastor and in my opinion a natural teacher. Following a vesper service, we gathered in the hall for a light dinner and an open forum and a chance for questions and answers in order for the community to "get to know" the bishop. Father taught the group, young and old, the meaning of "eis polla eti despota."

Communication

Communication is an important aspect of our diocese. I am aware of the proper order of communication. First going to the deans, then the chancellor, then to the hierarch. However, I want all of you to feel free to call me directly for issues that are personal, and any particular personal or pastoral concerns that you may have.

Orthodox New England is a wonderful vehicle and many are receiving the issues via e-mail. This makes it a relatively inexpensive means of communication throughout the diocese. Fr. John Dresko has been doing a wonderful job and is willing to continue in the areas of communication. Exactly why he wishes to continue is something I cannot understand. It is a time consuming responsibility.

Census, Data Base and Communication

I am unaware as to how up to date or how complete our diocesan database stands. This can be a tricky area. Most individuals would rather not have personal information in our or anyone else's data base. Privacy is a key element these days.

But a simple database, of members and outreach individuals, containing names, addresses, children's names, as well as e-mail addresses would give us a clearer picture of the make-up of our diocese

and authentic mission possibilities. Not only for us, but for the records and statistics held at our chancery offices and archives.

For instance, I was meeting with parish council members during one of my visits not too long ago, I won't say which diocese, or which parish. I simply asked what was the membership of the parish. From the five members of the council present, I received three (3) different answers.

I have to question the motives here. Were they unaware or simply unwilling to be truthful with the hierarch?

Missions

Many of our parishes are missions, it is for this reason and the mission possibilities in our sister diocese, that I looked into the policies and programs of several of our sister dioceses, as well as the mission programs of the OCA.

Many of you are aware that the national church requires that a mission station be established and the community commit at least \$15,000 annually for the mission, and the national church matches this amount, thus allowing a missionary pastor and his family to live and work for the betterment of the mission. This program is limited to three years. Further, a handbook for establishing a mission is already available from our national church.

The Greek archdiocese requires that a community have \$50,000 collected on their own before they will establish a new mission.

The Antiochian archdiocese, although affluent, states that a mission must be self-supporting from the start.

What do some of my brother hierarchs do when faced with mission possibilities? One chooses a leader in these areas and has regular prayer services and perhaps sends a priest once a month to start, if there is not a priest available for weekly Liturgy. Prayer services may be conducted by a deacon, sub-deacon or layman.

When it becomes apparent that it is a strong possibility, the area becomes, what is called a "mission

station” prior to being declared an actual mission.

Vocations first, missions second.

I do not present this as a challenge, but for information regarding our present parishes as well as any mission possibilities.

The Albanian Archdiocese pays full seminary tuition for the seminarians in that diocese.

The Greek Archdiocese has a program called the UPA. This stands for Unassigned Pastors Assistance. It is a program where the Archdiocese pays the pastors up to \$ 4,000 per month, for a two or three month period, while they are waiting for assignments or waiting for a mission to reach the necessary goals. These are some possibilities for all of us to consider.

The make-up of our sister dioceses vary. For instance, Bishop Nikolai of Alaska has 93 parishes and 29 priests. This is not the same with Bishop Job of the Diocese of the Midwest. He has several seminarians that will graduate soon, but not enough parishes to place them.

We may wish to ask Bishop Job if we can borrow a few if the need arises. By the way, I was with Bishop Job this past week and he sends his love to all of us in the diocese of New England.

There are some very telling aspects that speak to us – both from parishes and from pastors. Many parishes within the OCA are quite comfortable with their pastors having outside employment, or pastors who are already receiving pensions from former employers.

In many cases, the parishes need their pastors to have outside employment since they are unable to support their priest, even at a minimal standard of living.

At the same time, many pastors today prefer to have outside employment, not simply to support their families, but to give themselves and their families a sense of security and stability, as well as equity in personal property and control over their own lives and futures.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

has charged us and expects us to fulfill our mission on this continent. To grow, establish new parishes and communities, expand our existing parishes and spread the Good news, preaching the Gospel.

I have every confidence that our clergy and laity are and will continue to be a visible witness of new and innovative ways to expanded and continue thus answering God’s call and fulfill our mission, to teach all nations.

The past few days I was in Syosset attending the meeting of the Holy Synod – a great deal was discussed and the minutes will be available soon in *The Orthodox Church*.

I can tell you that the areas of discussion covered a myriad of topics. We heard extensive reports from:

The Board of Theological Education and the Archdiocese of Canada is starting a late vocations program.

The chancellor gave an extensive report on all areas of church life.

Our representative church in Moscow will be hosting a year long celebration in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of St. Catherine’s. A video on the activities of St. Catherine’s was shown and is now being transferred to a VHS format for viewing in the US by our parishes.

The Department of Church Ministries submitted their report for review.

A presentation on the importance of archives was given by historian Yaroslav Pelikan. This in anticipation of the establishment of an archives building at Syosset.

Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky gave his report on external affairs and on the activities of SCOBA (The Standing



Participants listen to reports at the Diocesan Assembly.

Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America).

Although many rumors have been circulating about a Russian diocese within the USA, they remain rumors. There are no immediate plans for the Moscow Patriarchal diocese to expand in this area either.

Discussions between the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate are guarded at best.

The Treasurer submitted the Budget for 2004.

The Departments of FOS and Planned Giving also reiterated that there has been a decline in contributions.

Applications for seminaries and clergy were reviewed and of course, background checks must now be part of this process.

Holy Protection Monastery in Miami (a former Byzantine Catholic monastery) will be received into the OCA as a stavropighial institution.

A paper on 2nd marriages as an impediment to ordination was presented to the Holy Synod. It was a well written, informative and extensive report.

A commission to update the Statutes of the Orthodox Church in America was also approved by the Holy Synod.

The Metropolitan proposed Fr. Tikhon, Deputy Abbot of St. Tikhon’s Monastery as his Auxiliary Bishop

Report of the Diocesan Chancellor

Your Grace, Reverend Fathers,
Sisters and Brothers:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Welcome to the 40th
New England Diocesan Assembly.

Diocesan Life

Three diocesan parishes attained landmark anniversaries in 2003: Saint Mark of Ephesus Church, Kingston, MA – twenty years; Dormition of the Holy Theotokos Church, Cumberland, RI – ninety-five years; and Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, Terryville, CT, our hosts for this assembly, – ninety-five years.

Though the respective rectors and assembly delegates may choose to say more in their reports, we rejoice with two diocesan parishes that are embarking on major building programs. Holy Resurrection Church, Claremont, NH, is beginning the construction of a church hall, classrooms and an enlarged church vestibule. In three weeks, on November 16th, His Grace Bishop Nikon will preside at the service of ground-breaking and planting of the cross for the construction of a church building for Christ the Savior Mission, Woodbury, CT. And we look forward to the consecration of Saint Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church this coming May.

- In December, the senior active priest of our diocese, Father Eugene Pianovich, of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Springfield, MA, entered retirement.

- In December, Deacon Michael Korolev was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and was assigned as acting rector of Saints

Peter and Paul Church, Springfield, MA. Father Michael began his assignment in January.

- In February, John Zarras, of Christ the Savior Mission, Woodbury, CT, was ordained to the diaconate and attached to the mission.

- In April, Father George Tyapko, formerly of Ukraine, was assigned as acting rector of Saint Nicholas Church, Pittsfield, MA.

- In July, Father Alexei Kaluzhnyi, formerly of the Archdiocese of



Canada, was assigned as acting rector of Holy Resurrection Church, Berlin, NH.

- In August, Father Robert Dick, who had been acting rector, was assigned as rector of Holy Annunciation Church, Maynard, MA; and Father Antony Gori, who had been acting rector, was assigned as rector of Saint Mark of Ephesus Church, Kingston, MA.

- Though it has been several years since we have been able to make such an announcement, by God's grace there are no vacant parishes in our diocese at the time of the writing of this report.

- Last October Father Robert Arida was elected as Dean of the Boston Deanery. That election was blessed by Metropolitan Herman and Father Robert was appointed as dean following last year's assembly.

- Earlier this year, Father Paul Burholt, of Holy Resurrection Church, Claremont, NH, was presented with a serious health diagnosis. And this week Father Paul completes his last scheduled round of chemotherapy. We continue to pray for Father Paul and Matushka, and we pray that our merciful God direct the hands that care for him.

- In 2003, two clergy awards were approved by Metropolitan Herman and the Holy Synod: Fathers Peter Carmichael and Timothy Lowe were each awarded the office of Archpriest.

- This week, at the meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, was elected as Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese. Though the Archdiocese has been well cared for, first by

Metropolitan Theodosius and then by Metropolitan Herman as administrators, it has been more than twenty years since the Archdiocese has had a resident, ruling bishop. We rejoice with our sisters and brothers of the Albanian Archdiocese and we share in their joy as we pray for Bishop Nikon and his archdiocesan faithful: "Many Years!" His Grace will be enthroned as Bishop of Boston on the twenty-second of November.

A word of explanation is in order at this point. At the time of his consecration to the episcopate, Bishop Nikon was named auxiliary bishop to the Metropolitan. As auxiliary he was given the responsibility to care for both the

Albanian (non-territorial) Archdiocese and the Diocese of New England, neither of which dioceses had a resident bishop and both of which were under the care of the Metropolitan. Now, with his election to the see of Boston, Bishop Nikon is also appointed as administrator of the Diocese of New England. Understand, however, Metropolitan Herman continues to be our bishop and the see of Hartford and the Diocese of New England continues to be vacant. In that day that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit and to the Holy Synod, the New England Diocese will also be filled. Let us pray that our wait not be as lengthy as that of the Albanian Archdiocese.

With Bishop Nikon as administrator of the diocese, rather than as auxiliary to the Metropolitan, there may be some revision in administrative procedures. As soon as this is clarified by Metropolitan Herman and Bishop Nikon, parish clergy will be informed. Until that time, all administrative procedures are to continue as they are at present. Likewise, liturgical commemorations remain as at present.

- In May, with the office of diocesan youth director vacant, Father Vladimir Aleandro was appointed as director of the 2003 diocesan Youth Rally. With his parish building project getting into full swing, Father Vladimir asked that his appointment be for the 2003 rally only and not open-ended. In his customary style, Father Vladimir 'hit the ground running'. He put an organizing staff together and, with the help of many, administered a successful and memorable youth rally. We extend a diocesan 'thank you' to Father Vladimir for a job well done. Thanks also, to the full retinue of adult rally volunteers- both clergy and lay.

- In September, Metropolitan Herman appointed Father John Hopko as diocesan youth director. Father Aleandro will assist Father Hopko. Be mindful that the office of youth director is a weighty responsibility. I call on diocesan clergy and

laity alike to offer their assistance to Father Hopko and to be ready and willing to respond when he asks for help.

- Within the past week, His Beatitude established a new position and appointed Father John Dresko as director of diocesan communications. As such, Father John continues to be editor of our diocesan newspaper, *Orthodox New England [ONE]*. He also will manage our diocesan web site, and will be responsible for distributing diocesan assembly information and forms and for receiving reports. He will coordinate and facilitate transmission of information from national church offices to parishes and deaneries, and of parish and deanery information to diocesan and national church offices.

I now call your attention to two areas of diocesan life the discussion of which is likely to be somewhat unpopular. Almost surely it will antagonize and anger some.

- Each year, by statute and at the call of our hierarch, the diocesan assembly gathers for the annual meeting of our diocese – today for the fortieth successive year. For at least the past seventeen years, the assembly date has been the Friday and Saturday of the last full weekend in October. Therefore we know the date well in advance.

Yet, as if the call and direction of our bishop is inconsequential, some clergy do not refrain from scheduling weddings, baptisms, personal vacations or suspiciously convenient funerals during the time of the assembly. Some use any excuse, substantive or feeble, to justify their absence from all or part of the assembly. Some have not been present for the Satur-

day of the assembly for years.

Now I will be the first to acknowledge that, like our parish annual meetings, assemblies are not all equally exciting. Often the assembly is mostly 'routine' with the receiving of reports and the approval of a budget. However our participation in diocesan assemblies is not for 'entertainment value.' Certainly there can be legitimate reasons for an absence, however it is questionable if that can apply to the same parishes and the same clergy year after year. I submit that when we willfully schedule conflicts or repeatedly contrive lame excuses, we are being disobedient and disrespectful to our bishop and we reflect indifference to diocesan life. Further, we do a disservice to our respective parishes.

Likewise, deaneries are not intended to be ornamental or only on paper. Deanery clergy should be meeting regularly, at least several times each year. Parishioners may choose parochial isolation but for clergy to do so reflects negligence, indolence, indifference or dysfunction, and perhaps a spiritually impoverished attitude of self-sufficiency.

The Holy Synod has directed that deaneries are to organize three youth events annually, one each – educational, service and social. Is this directive fulfilled in non-functioning deaneries? Further, we are all saddened and sometimes shocked when clergy or parishes experience crises and/or scandal but in disregarding the very structures that are intended to provide a support system and more than an ounce of prevention, we give a stone where bread is called for.

It might be that *we* do not feel the need for a support system, but it is very likely the case that in our isolationism and parochialism we deprive those who do both feel and have such a need. Are our thoughts only for ourselves? Do we heed the word of Saint Paul? Do we do anything for 'the weaker brethren'? Or do we click our tongues and thank

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

February Issue

January 1st

March Issue

February 1st

CHANCELLOR FROM 7

God that we are 'not like other men'. Again we are sinfully wrapped up in our self-contained and exclusive world.

At the heart of the matter the issue is not meetings and assemblies, for these are only the symptoms. The real issue is a narrow and sinful false sense of independence and self-sufficiency that leads to both isolationism and disobedience, and that at the expense of parishes, deaneries, diocesan life and the good of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Saint Augustine reminds us: "One Christian is no Christian." And Holy Scripture tells us: "Teach a wise man and he will be yet wiser...." I pray these admonitions will be heard and heeded by the wise.

National Church Life

The next All-American Council is scheduled to be in Toronto in the summer of 2005. I remind all our parishes to maintain a line item in each parish budget for the All-American Council. I encourage the parishes that have done nothing thus far at least to divide the estimated council costs over the next two years. Begin to save and to prepare. We anticipate another All-American Council in two years. Let our diocese be fully represented – without excuses.

Following the spring meeting of the Holy Synod all parishes received a directive regarding comprehensive coverage for sexual misconduct. Parishes were instructed to add the diocese, national chancellor and the Orthodox Church in America to their existing coverage. Some clergy never read it and/or lost this instruction on their desks. Some parishes simply paid no attention. However, a number of parishes have made a serious and responsible effort to comply with the directive only to find that insurance carriers are unwilling to accept the additional exposure. This is the same experi-

ence we had on a diocesan level. Having no wish to be difficult or disobedient, we find ourselves unable to comply. I am pursuing this matter with our national chancellor.

At the last All-American Council, a fair-share system of support for the national church was adopted. We will speak more of it when we discuss the financial report. Since our diocese had functioned on a fair-share system for many years, adjustment to the national fair-share system has not been particularly difficult. And to my knowledge, none of our parishes have found their fair share to be a crushing share. At the same time we know that the national budget also relies on an increased level of voluntary giving. Just as we urge support of our diocesan stewardship program, *ONE Stewards*, we also urge support of the national program, *The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards [FOS]*. Good and wise stewardship includes 'first-portion giving', returning to God a portion of what is already his, and wisely using the remainder for the extension and building up of his kingdom.

As in the past, I ask: "Is your estate in order? Do you have a will? Have you remembered the Church – your parish, the diocese, the National Church, our seminaries and/or monasteries, Orthodox scholarship programs or charities in your will?" This too is wise and responsible Christian stewardship.

ONE Stewards and Stewardship

The goal of our diocesan stewardship program, *ONE Stewards*, is to provide full funding and support for youth work, for scholarships, for diocesan support of the national *Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards [FOS]*, and for the educational, charitable and missionary work of our diocese. Fair share assessments pay diocesan bills; but voluntary giving through *ONE Stewards* provides for the Christian life of our diocese. Through the *ONE Stewards* program we foster and support Christian conduct and

programs on a diocesan level. I challenge each assembly delegate and observer, clergy and lay, to be a member of *ONE Stewards* and to make a commitment of support. I call on each of you as representatives to this assembly and as parish leaders, to work within your parish to meet or exceed the minimal goal of 25% membership in *ONE Stewards* from every diocesan parish and mission. This year we fell short of our financial goal. We can and must do better for there is more work that can and must be done.

Thanks to director Greg Shesko and to Joshua Mosher, *ONE Stewards* treasurer and record keeper. Joshua is now a full-time student at Saint Vladimir's Seminary. His replacement has not yet been named.

Diocesan Council and Officers

The Diocesan Council met three times since our last assembly to conduct regular diocesan affairs, to insure the continuing effective operation of the various diocesan departments and committees, and for the fulfillment of its many responsibilities for the life of our diocese. [Usually the council meets four times annually, however, our December meeting was cancelled due to an ice storm.]

A council subcommittee produced a set of procedures and guidelines for parishes hosting diocesan assemblies.

His Grace, Bishop Nikon, will continue to care for both the Albanian Archdiocese and our diocese for the foreseeable future. Naturally, then, our two dioceses are sharing financial responsibilities for his support and care. Since our last assembly a finance committee from our diocese twice met with the finance committee of the Albanian Archdiocese to discuss areas of mutual concern and responsibility.

"Thank you!" to the members of the diocesan council and especially: to

CHANCELLOR TO 9

CHANCELLOR FROM 8

diocesan treasurer Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, and to diocesan secretary Lydia Dorsey. For personal reasons, effective as of this assembly, Lydia has submitted her resignation. Thanks to Father Steven and Matushka Cindy Voytovich for leading the diocesan choir director training program. Thanks to Father John Dresko for his work on our diocesan newspaper-*Orthodox New England*, And "Thank you!" to all the members of the diocesan council, diocesan committees and departments.

"Thank you!" to the deans of our three deaneries: Father Robert Arida, Father Peter Carmichael, and Father John Dresko, and to the dean of our diocesan missions, Father John Kreta.

Though not repenting for what I have said, I ask your forgiveness if I have spoken too directly. I pray that our diocesan family grow in faith, in love and in spiritual understanding. May the life-giving Holy Trinity continue to bless and guide the life of the Diocese of New England, her parishes and missions, and all her faithful.

Respectfully submitted,
Archpriest Michael Westerberg,
Chancellor, Diocese of New England

FORCC News

You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meetings. All meetings begin at 7:30 P.M. and end at 9:00 P.M. New members are always welcome.

Our tenth annual benefit dinner was held at the St. Nicholas Antiochian Church in Bridgeport. We thank all who have supported FORCC and those present today. We extend our sincere thanks to St. Nicholas parish for hosting the dinner.

Following the dinner, Deacon Sergius Halvorsen and Vladimir

FORCC TO 12

2003-2004 Diocesan Budget

INCOME	02-03 Budget	03-04 Budget	Difference	% Change
OCA Fair Share	210,970.00	210,970.00	-	0.00%
Diocesan Fair Share	77,100.00	79,075.00	1,975.00	2.56%
<i>Total Fair Share</i>	288,070.00	290,045.00	1,975.00	0.69%
ROLL Radio/TV	2,600.00	2,600.00	-	0.00%
OCA Mission	2,000.00	4,000.00	2,000.00	100.00%
Assembly Income	-	4,800.00	4,800.00	
ONE Stewards	21,000.00	21,000.00	-	0.00%
Rental Income	8,700.00	8,700.00	-	0.00%
Youth Rally	-	7,000.00	7,000.00	
Misc.	500.00	500.00	-	0.00%
Interest/Dividends	3,000.00	2,000.00	(1,000.00)	-33.33%
Total Income	325,870.00	340,645.00	14,775.00	4.53%
EXPENSES – Bishop (one-half of compensation; Albanian Archdiocese pays other half)				
Bishop	13,000.00	14,000.00	1,000.00	7.69%
Social Security	994.50	2,142.00	1,147.50	115.38%
Health Insurance	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	0.00%
Housing	7,800.00	7,800.00	-	0.00%
Pension	1,560.00	1,680.00	120.00	7.69%
Life Insurance	950.00	950.00	-	0.00%
Disability Insurance	61.50	62.00	0.50	0.81%
Travel Expenses	1,800.00	2,500.00	700.00	38.89%
Misc.	334.00	366.00	32.00	9.58%
<i>Total (Bishop)</i>	29,500.00	32,500.00	3,000.00	10.17%
Diocesan Administration				
Chancellor	6,000.00	6,250.00	250.00	4.17%
Secretary	500.00	500.00	-	0.00%
Treasurer	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	0.00%
Met. Council	500.00	500.00	-	0.00%
Deans	1,800.00	1,800.00	-	0.00%
Personal Assist. Prog.	1,350.00	1,350.00	-	0.00%
Diocesan Travel	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	0.00%
Computer Expenses	1,200.00	1,200.00	-	0.00%
Diocesan Insurance	2,500.00	2,750.00	250.00	10.00%
Office & Misc.	1,300.00	1,300.00	-	0.00%
OCA Fair Share	210,970.00	210,970.00	-	0.00%
<i>Total (Dio. Admin)</i>	228,120.00	228,620.00	500.00	0.22%
Diocesan Activities				
ONE Newspaper	21,000.00	21,500.00	500.00	2.38%
ROLL Radio/TV	2,600.00	2,600.00	-	0.00%
Assembly Expenses	1,750.00	6,500.00	4,750.00	271.43%
ONE Stewards	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	0.00%
<i>Total (Dio. Activities)</i>	27,850.00	33,100.00	5,250.00	18.85%
ONE Stewards				
Youth	6,000.00	12,000.00	6,000.00	100.00%
Youth Director(s)	1,600.00	2,000.00	400.00	25.00%
Charity & Discretionary	6,500.00	6,500.00	-	0.00%
Scholarships	5,500.00	5,500.00	-	0.00%
FOS	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	0.00%
Mission Support	14,400.00	14,400.00	-	0.00%
<i>Total (ONE Stewards)</i>	36,000.00	42,400.00	6,400.00	17.78%
Maintenance				
Maintenance Projects	1,500.00	1,000.00	(500.00)	-33.33%
Furnace Maint. Contract	150.00	275.00	125.00	83.33%
Property Manager	2,400.00	2,400.00	-	0.00%
Misc.	250.00	250.00	-	0.00%
<i>Total (Maint.)</i>	4,300.00	3,925.00	(375.00)	-8.72%
Bonds: Interest				
Surrenders	100.00	100.00	-	0.00%
<i>Total (Bonds)</i>	100.00	100.00	-	0.00%
Total Expenses	325,870.00	340,645.00	14,775.00	4.53%

Note: OCA Fair Share will change. Listed is 2003 amount.

PARISHES FROM 3



*Edie Nichols and Mickey DeLuccia honored in Meriden.
(Photo: Jock Semosh)*

Trustees for 10 years and as a member of the Cemetery Committee for 20 years. Congratulations to these two hard working people!

In October, our Seniors made blintzes with the proceeds going to our roof repair fund. In November, our Church School hosted Coffee Hour to help raise funds for the OCA Annual Christmas Stocking Project and our Choir held a bake sale to raise funds to purchase music books. On November 2nd, Father Timothy Lowe celebrated a memorial Panikhida for all departed members who are remembered in our Endowment Fund.

On November 9th, the parents of our Church School sponsored the Sixth Annual Thanksgiving Feast. All parishioners were invited and once again, we had a large turn out. All present enjoyed turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, squash, carrots, salad, baked breads, muffins, apple pies, and pumpkin pies. The Church School students also collected food goods and prepared several Thanksgiving Day baskets for needy families who live in the area of our Church.

We were happy to hear that Natasha Tassmer was selected to perform with the Connecticut Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association High School Honors Choir in October. Students are chosen to represent their school community and are required to prepare themselves musically for the event with only one Pre-Festival rehearsal.

We are looking forward to the next few months since we have several activities planned. Give us a call if you would like to join us.

- submitted by John S. Nighyew

New Haven, Connecticut

We were both surprised and honored to welcome His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, to our parish on Sunday, October 5th, for Divine Liturgy. Following Liturgy and Coffee Hour, the Metropolitan traveled to Bridgeport



*L-R: Fr. Michael and Lydia Westerberg, Rebecca Swimmer [who read the epistle], His Beatitude, and Barbara Pope in New Haven.
(Photo: Susan Lickwar)*

for the 10th annual FORCC dinner.

Congratulations, best wishes and many years to Daniel Crosby, Esquire. Dan recently passed the State of Connecticut bar exam.

Our stewardship tray for the month of October was dedicated to Father and Matushka Stremsky and their fifty adopted children in Saraktash in the Orenburg region of Russia. As usual, our parishioners were quite generous with their support. Thank you all.

Alexis Swan, once again did a fantastic job obtaining donations for the Christmas Stocking Project. Thank you.

Natalie Melbardis Ronai had a showing of her paintings and collages at the Margaret L. MacDonough Gallery at the Albertus Magnus College from October 31 through December 1.

We were honored to play host to the Children's Choir from the Holy Trinity Orthodox Mercy House (Saraktash, Orenburg region, Russia) on Monday, November 3.

The children performed a concert of Russian Sacred



Some of the children visiting from Mercy House in Russia after a concert in New Haven. (Photo: Susan Lickwar)

PARISHES FROM 10

and Folk Music. Proceeds from the concert help the children and elderly of Mercy House.

—submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

Northfield Falls, Vermont

St. Jacob's has just revived its newsletter, "River of Gladness." In the first (October) issue we announced a talk on "Orthodox Finland" by Drs. George and Elizabeth Theokritoff. This talk, which focused on Finnish Karelia and the New Valaam Monastery (continuation of the community from which St. Herman came), sounded the opening note of the second phase of our Capital Campaign.

Having raised over \$100,000 in the first round of our campaign and completed much of the necessary restoration work on our new building, the parish decided to seek funds this time, not only for our iconographic program, but to support the work of a church in Kondopoga, (Russian) Karelia, near the Arctic Circle. In part we are doing this because Karelia is a sister state to Vermont, which has as yet undertaken no Orthodox outreach. And in part we have been moved by the plight of this parish of the Dormition of the Mother of God, which is striving to serve, feed, and morally educate a great many of its impoverished neighbors, adults and children—descendants of those "relocated" by Stalin — and we want to help. So a percentage of what we raise will be sent to Karelia through a foundation that has been set up for this purpose.

In the ongoing work of the St. Jacob mission, we have also developed a significant outreach to the local poor; we recently made a major contribution to the medical expenses of a priest who is battling cancer; and we have committed \$100 a month each to two seminarians—Philip



L-R: Fr. Michael Westerberg, translator Dimitri Klimenko and Fr. Nikolai Stremsky, who with his wife adopted **fifty-three** children and founded Mercy House in Saratash, Orenburg region, Russia. (Photo: Susan Lickwar)

Majkrzak and Rowan Benedict Sheehan—who are attending St. Tikhon's.

On Holy Saturday, Fr. Mark Sherman received four catechumens into the Church: Max Yost, Christopher Catanzano, Jeremy Ingpen, and Raymond Young.

In August, Pavlos Sfyroeras and Maria Hatjigeorgiou spoke movingly to the parish about their recent visit to Aegina and the monastery St. Nectarios founded there. Pavlos and Maria went on from there to visit and pray with our Parish Council president, who is severely afflicted by lung cancer.

In September we celebrated our third Patronal Feast Day in Northfield Falls, joined by the priest and about 30 members of the Greek Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God in Burlington, Vermont. The parish was also blessed on this day by a visit from Fr. John Kreta and his family and the Kopchas, former St. Jacob parishioners.

The Orthodox Christian Association at Middlebury College has this year become an officially recognized college organization with some sixteen members. A number of these are Eastern European, hopeful of finding ways to recover national Orthodox customs obliterated during the Soviet domination of their nations. Fr. Mark maintains regular contact with this group and has plans to serve Liturgy there.

Other ongoing ministries at St. Jacob's are a Bible study (now moving carefully through the Gospel of John) led by Fr. Mark; reading and discussion group on St. Isaac the Syrian's *Ascetical Homilies* led by Subdeacon Don Sheehan at the Northfield public library; and a newborn Sisterhood for women to come together to share their experiences and goals as Orthodox women in the world, in the family, and in the Church, and to read, study, and serve as the Spirit leads us.

In sum, St. Jacob's is alive and well, growing slowly, getting a lot done with a little (like St. Jacob himself, whose journals are excerpted regularly in our newsletter),

PARISHES TO 12

Political Involvement

Holy Trinity parish in New Britain was intimately interested in the November 4th elections. Two parishioners won election to offices:

Adam Salina, in his first effort at running for an office was elected to the Town Council in Berlin. He was the top vote-getter in the election, and was subsequently voted Mayor by the council. Adam is 28 years old and becomes one of the youngest mayors in Connecticut.

Gale Dilger, also in a first time effort, won election to the Board of Education in the Town of Deep River.

The parishioners of Holy Trinity Church congratulate both Adam and Gale and are proud of the involvement in bettering our world by these two faithful people. May God grant them wisdom in the exercise of their offices.

PARISHES FROM 11

and putting down some good roots. Please come and visit us! Look for the old Falls Church on Rte 12 in Northfield Falls, Vermont. If you come before the snow falls, you'll know it by the chrysanthemums and pumpkins on the front steps.

– submitted by Xenia Sheehan



KINGSTON, MA – His Grace, Bishop Nikon, is pictured with Father Antony and Matushka Beverly Gori during his visit in October. (Photo: Matushka Laura McGillicuddy)

FORCC FROM 9

Morosan, sang musical selections from their new CD entitled “With the Voice of the Archangel.” All profits from the sales will benefit the Pan-Orthodox Society for the Advancement of Liturgical Music (PSALM). Refer to the PSALM website at www.orthodoxpsalm.org to order a CD or for more information.

Eva Vaniotis announced the names of the scholarship recipients and His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presented the awards.

FORCC President Nina Kosowsky introduced Helen Smerznak, member of Three Saints in Ansonia, donor of the Smerznak, Medak & Kidwell Scholarship Fund. Helen received a standing ovation and Metropolitan Herman bestowed blessings upon Helen.

Lew Nescott safely returned from Iraq. Medical supplies were distributed to three specialty hospitals and one orphanage. Lew handed the cash contributions to Father Younan Alfred, pastor of St. George’s Greek Orthodox Church and the IOCC’s chief clerical contact in Baghdad. Lew also presented Father Alfred with a letter of pastoral support from His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman. Special thanks and prayers for all of the donors (both orthodox and non-orthodox) without whom this mission would not have been possible.

– submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

2003-2004**Diocesan Council**

His Beatitude,
Metropolitan Herman
His Grace, Bishop Nikon

Archpriest Michael Westerberg
Chancellor

Priest John Hopko, *Secretary*
Protodeacon Paul Nimchek,
Treasurer

Deans

Archpriest Robert Arida, *Boston*
Archpriest John Dresko,

Connecticut

Archpriest Peter Carmichael,
Northern

Priest John Kreta, *Missions*

Clergy At-large

Archpriest Dennis Rhodes

Priest Steven Voytovich

Priest Vladimir Aleandro

Laity At-large

Paul Culton

David Rodgers

Joan Skrobat

Ann Sovyrda

Timothy Tessmer

Cindy Voytovich

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ONE-Orthodox New England

P.O. Box 2876

New Britain, CT 06050-2876

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