

## Nativity Message of His Grace, Bishop Nikon

*Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."*

(LUKE 2:8-11)

NATIVITY 2005

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

Dearly beloved:

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

What a joy it is to greet you with these words in my first archpastoral message to you as diocesan bishop. We have journeyed by fasting to the feast of the Nativity of Christ through all the distortions and the distractions of our society, which tries to change this wonderful day of the Gift to a day of consumption and "gifts."

The simple country shepherds referred to by the Evangelist Luke saw the glory of the Lord shining round them, and they were "greatly afraid." Would that we, and those around us, had the same healthy awe as we are invited to the household of God to be His children and heirs. The Gift of the eternal Son of God is an unimaginable act of love and sacrifice. We are called to accept that Gift in humility and to make Him alive in our lives and in those whom we encounter.

The angel announced the good tidings of great joy about the birth of a Savior. My prayer, beloved brothers and sisters, is that we each are blessed to hear the same glad tidings and that we

MESSAGE TO 12



## Diocese assembles in Southbury

Report of His Grace, Bishop Nikon

### Diocesan Changes and Assignments

We have experienced a number of pastoral changes over the past 12 months with reference to our clergy and there are now several vacancies and we anticipate that there will soon be a few other vacancies.

At the present time, Waterbury remains vacant with the transfer of Fr. Matthew Searforce. Fr. John Dresko works diligently to make sure that the parishioners of The Nativity of the Virgin Mary receive pastoral care while a suitable candidate may be found to fill this position.

REPORT TO 4

## Bishop's Installation

**December 16 (Holy Trinity Cathedral)**  
Vespers, 6:00 P.M.

**December 17**  
Hours, Greeting of the Hierarchs  
Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M.

Reception at D'Arbeloff Hall  
(lower level of the Cathedral)

Banquet at Elements Cafe, 1:30 P.M.

**December 18**  
Hours, Divine Liturgy, 9:00 A.M.

Tickets for the Enthronement Banquet are \$60.00. Find forms and more information at:

<http://www.holytrinityorthodox.org>

A Souvenir Program Book is being prepared to honor His Grace, Bishop Nikon, to commemorate this milestone in our Diocese. Your parish or any individual parishioners may add their names, for a donation of \$25.00, to those who will be congratulating His Grace, Bishop Nikon as he takes on his new responsibility in the Vineyard of Christ. Please contact Rev. Vasily Gilbert by Friday, December 9, 2005.

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*The Very Reverend John J. Dresko, Editor*

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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 2-3, 2005

*Connecticut Bible Lecture Series*  
*St. Paul's Letter to the Romans*  
*Fr. Paul Tarazi*  
*Christ the Savior Church, Southbury, CT*

December 8, 2005

*Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.*  
*Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT*

December 16-17, 2005

*INSTALLATION OF HIS GRACE, BISHOP NIKON*  
*Holy Trinity Cathedral, Boston, MA*

**Farewell**

It is time for me to say farewell to the readers of *Orthodox New England*. After fifteen years as editor of the diocesan publication, I will be assuming new duties in service to Christ and the Church. On January 1, 2006, I will become the full-time Director of Development, Planned Giving and Stewardship for The Orthodox Church in America. I will be relieved of all my parish, deanery and diocesan duties. His Grace, Bishop Nikon, will be appointing two new editors of *Orthodox New England*. I am sure they will do well and I wish them the best.

Over the past fifteen years it has been a joy to edit the diocesan newspaper, but especially to write on topics of interest to the average Orthodox parishioner and to get to know so many of you personally. I want to offer my thanks to everyone who acted as correspondents over the years. Your assistance made the timely publication of *ONE* possible.

I want to offer a special thanks to Archbishop Job, Metropolitan Theodosius, Metropolitan Herman, and Bishop Nikon for their confidence in me and that the issues would actually be published. I also want to offer a special thanks to my dear friend and our former Chancellor, Fr. Michael Westerberg, who offered much counsel and support over the years.

A very special thanks goes to my parish of Holy Trinity in New Britain. They have a very expansive and deep vision of the Church and always saw my work in publishing *ONE* as part of my work for the parish and Church.

Finally, brothers and sisters, I ask your forgiveness if anything I have written or published over the years has caused offense. Any fault is mine and mine alone. Please pray for me as I begin my new ministry in the Church.

*Father John Dresko*

# Around the Parishes

## *Ansonia, Connecticut*

This fall was a very eventful time for us at Three Saints Church. Our Sunday School is back in action and our new superintendents, Stacy Pimpinelli and Gloria Timpko are doing a great job coordinating activities for families as well as the children.

In October, after Divine Liturgy, Fr. Timpko had a procession along with the Altar Servers, down to the new bookstore for blessing. The Sunday School children and teachers joined in, and now the items that are sold there are also blessed. There were goodies at coffee hour in celebration of the new bookstore as well.

Our Food & Craft Fair was held November 11 and 12 with an assortment of homemade ethnic foods, new crafts and goods for sale, and even an update Fund Drive Raffle. Instead of the traditional grocery store gift certificates, parishioners made up themed baskets and chances were bought on the baskets – a list of winners will follow.

Our Senior Group continues to meet on it's own as well as there are many meeting for weekly Bible Study

## OUR DIOCESE

PEOPLE  
PLACES  
EVENTS

with Fr. Timpko. Some of the ladies will begin to prepare making lap robes, hats and scarves for homebound parishioners as well as people in need abroad.

– submitted by Julie Craft

## *Claremont, New Hampshire*

Reader Ambrose (Chip) Powell escorted four young parishioners to Education Day at St. Vladimir's Seminary on October 1<sup>st</sup>. They were John and Dan Powell, Ihor Nikolajchuk, and Nikita Eremine.

The group stayed overnight in Englewood, NJ and traveled the next morning to attend the hierarchical liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Herman, two attending bishops, a number of presbyters and deacons and two choirs.

The customary food service of foods from many ethnic traditions came after the liturgy and that was followed by the keynote address of Bishop Savvas of Troas and a number of workshops.

While at SVS, the group met up with Caleb Abetti and Sarah Krajcik, HROC seminarians at SVS. Also from Claremont were Tim Tregubov and Justin and Anna DeMoulin from Claremont and Alexandra Karlgut of



*Blessing of the new bookstore in Ansonia*

Endicott, NY.

A number of parishioners and friends from Claremont attended a concert presented by the Anchiskhati Choir in Westminster West, VT on October 24 in front of a full and most appreciative audience at the town's community church.

This was the initial concert of the group leading off a tour of the Eastern and Midwestern U.S. of over twenty presentations, concluding at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Washington on November 20.

The ensemble comes from the country of Georgia in the Caucasus and is the leading exponent and conservator of Georgian polyphonic music, featuring ancient sacred hymns from the Georgian Orthodox liturgy and secular songs, such as work songs, funeral laments, historical ballads, and love songs and expressing the emotional and spiritual culture of a deeply musical people.

It seems that 2005 has been a year of many baptisms at Holy Resurrection parish.

Father Andrew baptized Cassia Mary, daughter of Rowan and Talia Sheehan of Vermont on October 9<sup>th</sup> before the Divine Liturgy. Cassia's godparents are Father Dimitry and Mary Perez of Pennsylvania. A reception attended by many relatives, parishioners and friends followed in the parish hall.

– submitted by Lawrence Johnson

## *Hartford, Connecticut*

We rejoiced at All Saints Church as we gathered with His Grace, Bishop Nikon, and Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, for a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and the blessing of our new ramp. His Grace, on behalf of the parish, presented an icon of Christ healing the Paralytic to David Vargas in

**REPORT FROM 1**

Meriden still yearns for a permanent pastor, although Meriden is being faithfully pastored by Fr. Sergius Halvorsen ever since Fr. Timothy Lowe accepted a teaching position in the middle-east

There is in fact, a shortage of clergy and this makes it increasingly difficult not only to fill pastorates, but to give our current clergy a chance for a much needed retreat or vacation. Psychologists today will tell you that one of the most stressful occupations is that of pastor. We certainly want to do all we can to aid our pastors in their most holy work.

At the Holy Synod meeting last week, the bishops were given the following list of vacant parishes or parishes where the pastors or parish councils have requested a change. These include:

*Albanian Archdiocese*  
Worcester, MA

*Diocese of the Midwest*  
St. Louis, MO  
Desloge, MO  
Lakewood, OH

*Diocese of New England*  
Waterbury, CT  
Meriden, CT  
Pittsfield, MA  
Salem, MA

*Romanian Episcopate*  
Alexandria, VA

*Diocese of Washington and New York*  
Watervliet, NY  
Cohoes, NY  
Saddlebrook, NJ

*Diocese of the West*  
Eureka, CA  
Redding, CA  
Chico, CA  
Menlo Park, CA

*Diocese of Western Pennsylvania*  
Masontown, PA.

**Seminarians**

For our diocese, we do anticipate some relief from this problem in a few years. According to the official listing given to the members of the Holy Synod, our seminarians at St.



*His Grace, Bishop Nikon, delivers his report*

Vladimir's are Caled Abetti, Sarah Krajcik, Jennifer Mosher, Fr. Joshua Mosher, Andrey Sukharev, and Dn John Zarras. There are none listed from our diocese at any other seminary. However, Dimitry Kaluzhny is with us during this assembly and he is studying at St. Tikhon's and doing very well.

We certainly congratulate our students and the clergy and lay leaders who support all initiatives in fostering vocations. We do offer modest scholarships to our seminarians and we encourage them to apply. Our policy is that they must apply each semester.

Although we assume that our seminarians will return to our diocese, this is not always the case. During the deliberations of the Holy Synod, it was pointed out that while in seminary all students are under the protective Omophorion of the Metropolitan, and rightfully so.

However, it does not follow, that seminarians from one diocese will automatically return to the diocese from which they came, unless that diocese has paid the full tuition and fully supported that particular student. At the present time the only dioceses that fully take care of seminary tuition are the Antiochian

and Albanian dioceses.

This should not discourage our seminarians from applying for the scholarships that we offer. Nor should it discourage us from offering the scholarships.

I posed the scenario, that if I visit the seminaries and find promising students and offer to pay their tuition, would that then be a guarantee that they would be returned to our diocese. The Metropolitan said no – but he would certainly be thankful for the donation to the seminary.

**Health**

We are more than joyous that those in our diocese who have undergone surgery or medical treatments are all doing very well and are on their way to recovery. We are most grateful for your prayers. The Matushki have expressed their thanks to us and all appear to be doing very well, and personally I think they're looking wonderful.

Fr. Nicholas Timpko is recovering extremely well following his surgery. Unfortunately Fr. Paul Burholt was healed so well, via our prayers, that he has requested a transfer to the Diocese of the South. We wish him well in this new endeavor serving a mission under the protective

Omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri.

### Representations and Youth

I was privileged to serve with the SCOBA hierarchs on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Central Massachusetts Clergy Association on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. SCOBA is the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America.

Another gathering of all of the bishops in America is planned in October or November of 2006.

OISM is the Orthodox Inter-Seminary movement. Each year seminarians gather for a lecture by one of our senior pastors or hierarchs. I was most honored to address the OSIM gathering this past fall. The president happened to be the student living across the hall from me while I was living at St. Tikhon's, preparing for Episcopal consecration. That seminarian, Paul-Gabriel Ericson, also accompanied the Sitka icon of the Theotokos to several of our parishes. Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston and Holy Transfiguration in New Haven.

In addition, whenever possible, I attend the OCF meetings. The OCF is the Orthodox Christian Fellowship which is the official campus ministry for all Orthodox in America. I

have recently begun meeting with these students at UCONN.

In Boston I also hosted a visitation of crossroads, a youth orientated program where college and high school students from around the country gather together and visit local churches and speak with the clergy and hierarchs.

### Visitations & Representations

Since my last report to you, I have visited every parish in our diocese – some more than once – and every parish in the Albanian diocese. Along with the scheduled visitations I also represented our diocese at an awards banquet honoring former Senator Bob Dole in New York. I also had the opportunity to make a courtesy call on Governor Romney in Massachusetts.

In addition, during the past twelve months, I attended a reception for Bishop Sean O'Malley, the new Roman Catholic hierarch in our area as well as making a courtesy call on Metropolitan Methodius of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

### Parish Highlights

Several of our parishes have celebrated anniversaries this year; St. Nicholas Church in Norwich, Con-

necticut, celebrated their 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as did Holy Transfiguration Church in New Haven, Connecticut. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, was able to participate in the festivities and celebration in New Haven and His Eminence, Archbishop Job, joined us for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Holy Trinity Church in Springfield, Vermont.

These celebrations are more than milestones – it is important for us to realize that our communities have offered spiritual guidance and care for decades, spanning several generations of our faithful.

We wish them many more years of service in the Lord's vineyard and have the prayerful support of all of their sister parishes in our diocese.

In addition to these Anniversaries, St. Tikhon's Monastery celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and I was again privileged to participate in this most important event in the life of the church in America.

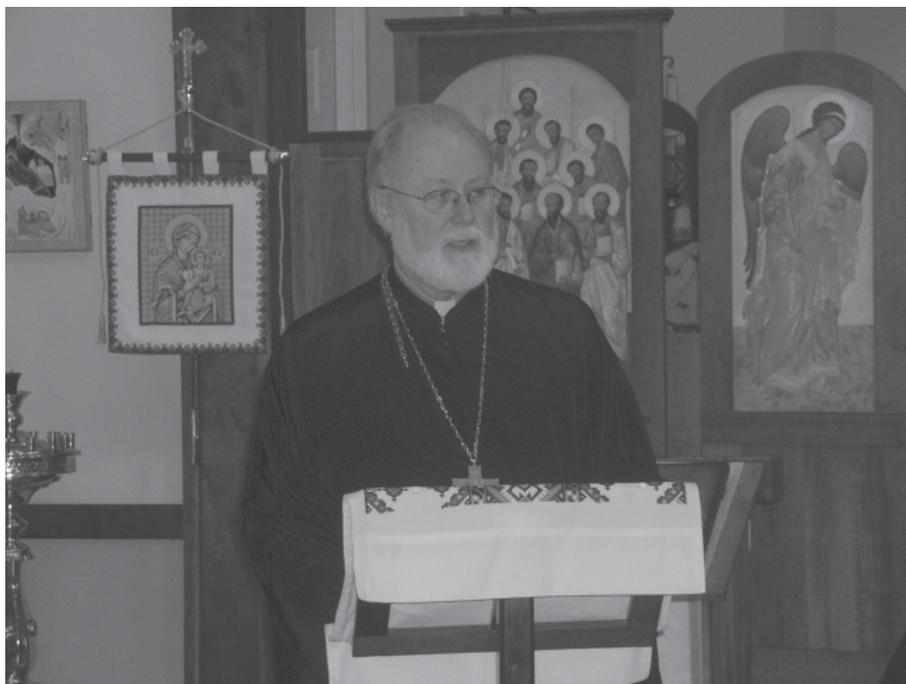
### USA Travel

This past August we celebrated the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the glorification and canonization of St. Herman of Alaska. I traveled to Alaska representing both the Diocese of New England and the Albanian Archdiocese at this most important and glorious event in the life of our church.

His Eminence, Leo, Archbishop of Karelia and Finland, along with his entourage, accompanied us for this celebration, bringing with him the Icon of the Theotokos of New Valaamo. The Valaamo monastery is the monastery where St. Herman began his monastic life and was sent as a missionary to America.

On the return travels, His Beatitude asked if I would accompany His Eminence, Leo, to Ground Zero in New York. We laid a wreath and celebrated a very moving and prayerful memorial service at the site.

I continue to be the Episcopal



*Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky was the featured speaker on Friday at the Assembly.*

## REPORT FROM 5

moderator of the OCA's Pension Plan and Fr. Michael Westerberg continues to serve as group leader.

### International Visitations

Just as it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop to make Archpastoral visitations to the parishes in his care; similarly, it is the responsibility of the Metropolitan to make visitations to the other 14 autocephalous churches throughout the world. I was privileged to accompany the Metropolitan on his recent visitations to St. Petersburg and Moscow for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Catherine's, St. Catherine's is our representation church located in the heart of Moscow. Fr. Zachaeus, the pastor of St. Catherine's, I know has been most helpful to some Albanian couples while adoption procedures took place in Russia.

During our visitation, His Holiness, Alexei, Patriarch of Moscow celebrated with us and I received the Order of St. Alexis (3<sup>rd</sup> degree) from His Holiness.

On the same journey, we visited His Eminence, Leo, Archbishop of Karelia and Finland and the monasteries located throughout the country. We were housed at New Valaamo Monastery.

The system in Finland is a good one, but one that we probably not be able to employ here in the United States. Ten percent of one's salary is automatically sent to the church of their choice.

The women's monastery in Finland hosts 20,000 pilgrims per year and they support themselves by making and selling candles. They sell one million candles per year.

Since these international visitations are part of the Metropolitan's obligation, all expenses for him and for the accompanying hierarchs are assumed by the national church.

### Local and National Church Responsibilities

I have again asked each pastor of both dioceses to meet with me during our respective assemblies to schedule my visitations for 2006, although

many dates have already been scheduled through next year. Sometimes adjustments or changes have to be made to the schedule, but I prefer adjusting an existing schedule, rather than a "catch as catch can" type of schedule.

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 more importantly, the bishops serve as pastor 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 – no matter who the bishop is.

During Great Lent a clergy retreat for the Northern Deanery was held in St. Johnsbury and it was hosted by Protodeacon Alexis Bona. We are most grateful for his Orthodox hospitality and he is a great cook.

### All American Council

Over 1700 clergy and lay delegates attended the 14<sup>th</sup> All American Council held this past July in Toronto. This is where the whole church gathers. All hierarchs, all dioceses, all clergy and representatives from all parishes, gather to guide the church.

The theme of the council was one that mirrors the theme of most of our diocese – "Our Church and the Future"

Finances were certainly discussed, but the emphasis was geared toward the church's ability to fund numerous programs of our church – such as the seminarian internship projects.

The full and complete minutes of the council may be accessed through the OCA website at [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org).

It was gratifying to have so many from our diocese participate in these deliberations.

The next All American Council will be held five (5) years from now in 2010. A five year span was necessary as changes in the statutes are being suggested, recommended and updated.

### R & R

Anticipating a much needed vacation, just a few days in Florida during last winter's storm seemed to be the best bet for me. However, His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South was unable to travel to Florida for the Anniversary of Christ the Savior Cathedral in Miami.



*Protodeacon Paul Nimchek and His Grace, Bishop Nikon, serve the opening Molieben for the Assembly*

Knowing that I was in Florida at the time, Bishop Dmitri called and asked if I wouldn't mind covering for him for this occasion.

Thus, during the largest snow storm in decades, most of the New England parishes were closed and most of the parishes in the Albanian Archdiocese were also closed due to the weather.

It occurred to me, that I was the only one working during my vacation. But in all seriousness, it was my pleasure to serve at Christ the Savior on behalf of Archbishop Dmitri, who served so many years as administrator of both the New England and Albanian diocese.

### Recognition

I wish to especially thank our Treasurer, Protodeacon Paul Nimchek. He does a fine job and I accompanied him to a joint Diocesan Fair Share presentation and retreat in Clinton, CT

In addition to Fair Share, the FOS department has a new director, Fr. Eugene Vansuch. I have given my blessing for him to visit our parishes at the invitation and discretion of the pastor. FOS has now become a major part of the National Church budget. At the present time, fifty percent of our parishes are FOS subscribers. Certainly there may be individuals in all of our parishes, but Fr. Eugene's goal is to have all of the OCA parishes become members of FOS.

### New England Election

Last October during our Assembly, we petitioned the Holy Synod to declare the See of Hartford and New England vacant so that we may proceed with the election of a ruling bishop.

On June 23, 2005, a special Assembly was held at All Saints Church in Hartford. We are grateful to the community of All Saints for their hospitality on this occasion.

Although I had been administering the diocese, I could not be a candidate according to the Statutes of the OCA.

One diocese cannot nominate or elect a bishop of another diocese. Naturally after more than a year as

administrator, I was someone familiar and known.

No clear candidate received a required two thirds at this assembly. So, a resolution, forfeiting our right to vote and nominate a candidate, was passed and the resolution basically petitioned the Holy Synod to appoint and elect a hierarch for the diocese.

We propose names, the Synod elects. Bishops elect Bishops.

As you are already aware, at our meeting last week, I was elected as ruling bishop of the Diocese of New England. The new title is Bishop of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese. Boston is of historical significance for both the Diocese of New England and the Albanian Archdiocese.

Formal installation will take place at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston on December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. That is a Friday and Saturday.

I know it is a busy time of year, just before the Feast of the Nativity, but we hope that most or many of our clergy and faithful will be able to participate in the installation services.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, will naturally be the celebrant and Archbishop Job will also be in attendance. He asked if he could come and I did invite him. As you may remember, Archbishop Job was the bishop of our diocese for many years and he has fond memories of his tenure in New England.

### Communication

Communication is a key factor for any organization. Sometimes we feel disconnected from each other simply because we are not "in touch" with each other. *O.N.E.* is our official organ of communication. Each parish should have a communication coordinator, so that information may be sent to Fr. Dresko for inclusion in *O.N.E.* This is an ideal network and source of information and ideas. We are doing ourselves a disservice when we do not send pertinent information to our communications director.

I know that Fr. John prefers to receive information via e-mail, electronically, but he would be equally or almost equally joyful to receive the

information via snail mail.

To keep in contact with him for any and all activities occurring in your parish communities not only informs but fosters a closer relationship between our three deaneries.

### Conclusion

Setting goals and defining a vision for our diocese is the responsibility of the hierarch and our clergy. Prior to formal installation, serving as administrator I have concentrated on visitations, establishing better communications between the parishes and the hierarch.

And following the formal installation, the first order of business is to try and find suitable pastors to fill the vacancies in our diocese.

Thus, to begin again together –  
Better communication  
Filling vacancies –  
And encouraging vocations –

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has charged and expects us to fulfill our mission on this continent. To grow, establish new parish communities, expand our existing parishes and spread the Good News, preaching the Gospel.

And with the help, experience, and guidance of my fellow pastors and parishioners, I have every confidence that we will define and re-define the vision for our diocese – and become visible witnesses – and vehicles of new and expanded ways, in which we have answered and continue to answer God's call and fulfill our mission

To teach all nations....

## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

January Issue  
December 1<sup>st</sup>

February Issue  
January 1<sup>st</sup>

## Report of the Chancellor

### *Diocesan Life*

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, at its fall session, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, elected His Grace, the Right Reverend Bishop Nikon to be the ruling bishop of the Diocese of New England. Though we have never been without hierarchical care and support the New England Diocese has not had a residing ruling bishop for more than thirteen years. We joyfully receive the decision of the Holy Synod and we greet Bishop Nikon with respect and affection. We pray that God will grant him many years. We also need to be mindful of the fact that His Grace will have ideas and plans. There may be new programs and initiatives for the good of the diocese. I call on all to have a spirit of openness and cheerful cooperation and a willing spirit in working for the up-building of Christ's holy Church within the diocese.

Eight diocesan parishes attained landmark anniversaries in 2005: Saint Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church, Clinton, CT and Saint Jacob of Alaska Church, Montpelier/Northfield Falls, VT – ten years • All Saints of North America Mission, Salisbury, CT, – fifteen years • Holy Resurrection Church, Berlin, NH, Saint Nicholas Church, Norwich, CT and Holy Transfiguration Church, New Haven, CT – ninety years • Holy Trinity Church, Springfield, VT – one-hundred years • Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT – one-hundred-ten years

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Christ the Savior Mission, Southbury, CT, formerly located in Woodbury, CT, was consecrated by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, and many assembled priests, deacons and faithful. With the consecration of the church building the status of the Mission was formally changed to that of 'Church'. And, as you well know, Christ the Savior is the host parish for this year's diocesan assembly. We rejoice in the work that God and his faithful have

done in this place and we pray for the parish's continued growth and maturity.

-In January, Father Vladimir Eremine, who had been attached to Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT, at his own request, was granted a leave of absence. He is presently teaching in Keene, NH.

-In March, Father John Bernardi was received into the OCA, in retired status, by His Grace, Bishop Nikon, and attached to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Chelsea, MA.

-In April, Father Paul Burholt, of Holy Resurrection Church, Claremont, NH, at his own request, was transferred to the Diocese of the South.

-In August, Father Matthew Searforce was released from the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church Waterbury, CT, and from the Diocese of New England, and transferred to the Albanian Archdiocese for assignment in Philadelphia.

-In August, Father Timothy Lowe, of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT, at his own request, was granted a leave of absence in order to accept a teaching position in Ramallah, in Palestine.

-In September, Deacon Joshua Mosher, of Holy Transfiguration Church, New Haven, CT, was

ordained to the holy priesthood at Holy Transfiguration Church. He is in his senior year of studies at Saint Vladimir's Seminary.

-Two parishes are vacant at this time: Saints Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT, – Father John Dresko is administrator of the parish; and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Waterbury, CT, and I am the administrator of the parish.

-Two diocesan clergy underwent serious surgeries during the past year. Father Matthew Searforce underwent double hip replacement, and Father Nicholas Timpko underwent knee replacement. Father Nicholas required two subsequent knee surgeries to correct a complication. By God's grace and by the prayers of many, both Father Matthew and Father Nicholas are now doing well.

Matushka Evelyn Kreta is now doing well and recovering her strength following the serious health difficulties of the past year-and-a-half. Matushka Karen Dick continues to experience serious medical issues. We pray that our Lord grant His strength and His perfect healing to His servants.

-In 2005 the following clergy awards were approved by Metropolitan Herman and the Holy Synod: • In



*Ordination of Deacon Joshua Mosher to the Holy Priesthood in New Haven.*

June, Protodeacon Paul Nimchek marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the diaconate and was presented was a Synodal Gramota • Fathers Paul Burholt, Alexie Kalushnyi, Michael Korolev and George Tyapko were awarded the nabedrenik and skufia • Fathers Vladimir Aleandro and Vladimir Horoszczak were awarded the Gold Cross • Father Dennis Rhodes was awarded the Jeweled Cross. (Though the Holy Synod had awarded the Jeweled Cross to Father Vasily Lickwar in 2004, as reported last year, the Jeweled Cross was presented to Father Vasily in 2005.)

### *National Church Life*

In July, our Church assembled in Toronto, Canada, for the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. The work of the Council was far ranging and the discussions and deliberations dealt with a multitude of topics. Council decisions and actions are posted on the OCA website and ought to have been reported to parishes by their respective delegates. I will not deal with the work of a week-long triennial council in this brief report.

However, just as we in our parish meetings and diocesan assemblies must always give attention to financial matters and adequate support for the functioning of our diocese and parish, so too, the All-American Council considered budgetary needs of the North American Church.

When we turn our attention to the budget we will notice a *fair-share* increase reflecting the minimal needs of our Church. Whenever finances are discussed and increases enacted there are grumblers and cynics; and those who want to keep the most while paying the least will probably always be among us. Nevertheless, it must be understood that our 'legislated and required' support both for our diocese and for the Church is minimal and in many cases no more than token.

Parishes that have not already done so need to pursue stewardship education programs – not for the sake of the 'bottom line' but for the

very salvation of the faithful who will be called to give an account to the Master of the vineyard both for what is given and for what is held back.

Understand, also, that although the parish priest needs to be a part of stewardship education efforts, such efforts will never be successful if they are placed entirely on the shoulders of parish clergy. Parish clergy and lay leadership who fail to speak about stewardship matters neglect a serious aspect of Christian life. Responsible stewardship is not a money issue but a Gospel imperative, and it is the work of all.

Two weeks ago, at the fall meeting of the Holy Synod, it was decided that the 15<sup>th</sup> All-American Council is to be held in five years, rather than three, that is in 2010. With five years to prepare and to save, it is my hope that parishes will set funds aside annually so that our diocese will have full representation and participation in that council.

### *Parish Administration*

In my report last year, I called to your attention an important point of parish finances – this is the matter of tax reporting for social security purposes. At the end of each calendar year, on either the W-2 form or the 1099 form, parishes are required, by federal statute, to report the cash housing allowance for those who receive cash.

For those who live in parish owned housing the fair market value of provided housing must be reported. This amount – either cash or value – is itemized separately from salary. The amount is not taxable income but, by law, it is included in computing social security taxes. Parish councils and parish financial officers have a fiduciary responsibility, a legal obligation to meet this federal requirement. It is not optional in the law.

Some of our parishes are not in compliance with federal law in this matter. These are not 'diocesan rules' and they are not optional. Keep in mind that there is no insurance coverage and no diocesan bailout for parishes or parish officers who have

violated the law. Parish financial officers should be particularly concerned about this serious matter. And this point takes on another dimension when we turn our attention to clergy pensions.

In the second week of November, Metropolitan Council delegates will consider a proposal to base pension remittances on the same aforementioned social security figure. This is a significant upgrading of pension benefits and it will be reported again and discussed at the time of the Pension Plan report. Though I do not wish to presume or take for granted the favorable action of the Metropolitan Council, it is anticipated that the Council will pass this proposal. It will then become effective as of January 2006. Parish budget planning should make allowance for this change.

### *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 call on 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 had raised the bar and we fell short of meeting our *ONE Stewards* goal. It is much to be preferred that rather than dues, taxes or assessments, we increase our volun-

## PARISHES FROM 3

appreciation of David's work on the accessibility project, which includes the ramp and a bathroom on the main floor of the Church. Following Liturgy, parishioners gathered at Angellinos Restaurant in Wethersfield for dinner. Fr. William thanked the benefactors of the project, which include the Altar Sisterhood, Russian American National Center, FOCA-R Club and parishioners.

The parish welcomed Jonathan Christopher, infant son of Suzanne Bartley and Joseph Cabral, who was received into the Church through the Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation. Many Years! We also welcomed our two newest members Matthew and Laura Nimchek. Many Years!

Our Church School High School Class presented a brunch to benefit the Orthodox Church in America's Christmas Stocking Project. The students also are selling paper stockings upon which donors put their names and then have them decorated and hung in the auditorium. The school year began with a molieben welcoming students and teachers for another year of learning about our faith. Speaking of learning, Father also reinstated his 50 minute adult discussion, which is held monthly during coffee hour, giving persons and opportunity to discuss and learn more about our faith and its application in our lives.

- submitted by Fr. William DuBovik

### *New Haven, Connecticut*

During our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and in recognition of Father Michael and Matushka Lydia's 25 years of service to our parish, the parishioners presented them with a beautiful Waterford Crystal Bowl.

October was a very busy month for us. Wednesday, October 12 we hosted the Stremsky Family Children's Choir from Russia. Following Daily Vespers, the children preformed a choral concert of Russian sacred and folk music. All proceeds from this concert were donated to



*The oldest parishioner Sonya Tetmeyer and the youngest parishioner, Natalie Ciarleglio (daughter of Tanya and Gary) sitting together at the banquet celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Holy Transfiguration Church.*

help the family and the Mercy House.

Wednesday, October 19 the Wonderworking Sitka Mother of God Icon from Alaska was available for veneration at the 7:00 P.M. Akathist. This icon is on a two-month pilgrimage across the nation that began on September 7, in Seattle. The icon resides at the Archangel Michael Cathedral, Sitka Alaska, since the mid-1800s.

Sunday, October 23 at twelve noon, we enjoyed the Yale Slavic Chorus. Sunday, October 30 Parish Open House was held from 3 -5 P.M. with conducted tours and explanation of our iconography.

Our sincere thanks to all who helped host these events. All had a wonderful time. Thanks to our generous parishioners, our hospitality tables were overflowing.

Alexis Swan is in charge of the annual Christmas Stocking Program, which provides modest gifts to orphaned and impoverished children.

At the Diocesan Assembly, our starosta, Daniel Crosby, Esquire was elected as the New England Diocesan representative to the Metropolitan Council.. Congratulations and Many Years.

- submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

### *Southbury, Connecticut*

Wow! October was an extremely bust month at Christ the Savior Church. Following are some of the activities.

Christmas bells were ringing and our children were dressed in their finest red and green outfits in October. Were we a little early in our celebration? Actually, our Live Wires were collecting money for Project Christmas Stocking, and raised \$667!

A member of our Live Wires Sunday School group, Paul Krainiy was baptized on October 23. It was a joyful day of celebration for our community and most especially his family.

A future Live Wires member was born on Saturday, October 22 during the Divine Liturgy. Emi Elizabeth Whitfield joined her Mother, Manna, Father Lee and sisters Ayame and Mia. We are so happy for this special family - may God grant you many years!

As some of you may know, our parish hosted the Diocesan Assembly this year. Many people worked very hard to bring together all of the details. We think it went well!

This year we began a new tradition, which we hope will continue; Stewardship Day. During coffee hour we considered our time and talents, and signed up for those areas of stewardship where we could help.

Looking ahead, we are eagerly anticipating Fr. Paul Tarazi's return for another installment in the Connecticut Bible Lecture Series. Father Paul will be joining us on Friday, December 2 and Saturday, December 3 for a discussion on the Book of Romans. We hope that you will be able to join us. Please feel free to contact Father Vladimir at (203) 267-1330 for further information.

- submitted by Sarah Cole

**Springfield, Vermont**

October 5, 1905 Fr. Alexander Hotovitsky served the Divine Liturgy in a house on Valley Street for the very first time in Springfield, Vermont. True to his commitment, 100 years later, Holy Trinity Orthodox Church celebrated Divine Liturgy on October 8, 2005 to celebrate the anniversary. Springfield has been a center of the Orthodox Church of America for all of its existence. Many people have worshiped here over the 100 years. Those of importance and those of whom we know little of. In the 1920's an orphanage existed at the church. Children who needed help were provided for.

Visitors over the years included: Tolstoy's nephew, Sigorsky and many metropolitans. Speakers have been: Fr. Alexander Schmemann, Fr. Thomas Hopko and many others. The parish has always tried to maintain a full liturgical life. Years were lean during the 50's and 60's. Life revitalized in the 70's and to date the parish, though small, maintains a full liturgical cycle. Membership is small and lately many people from that generation have passed away, but through the Holy Spirit with many frequent visitors and committed members keeps on going.

It was our delight that His Eminence, Archbishop Job, and His Grace, Bishop Nikon, attended and along with eleven other priests from around New England helped celebrate this anniversary. There will more than likely never be a more precious point in history for this church and for those in New England who attended this celebration.

The next "Big One" will probably be two hundred years and there are none of us who will be there. Make no mistake, there will be people in another hundred years at HTOC to celebrate and we hope their commitment and dedication is as fervid as ours was for the 100<sup>th</sup>. For us at HTOC this was Pascha. The anticipation, the worship, the love and the celebration were equal. Thanks to all who made this happen.



*His Grace, Bishop Nikon, His Eminence, Archbishop Job and concelebrants in Springfield, VT*

**FORCC News**

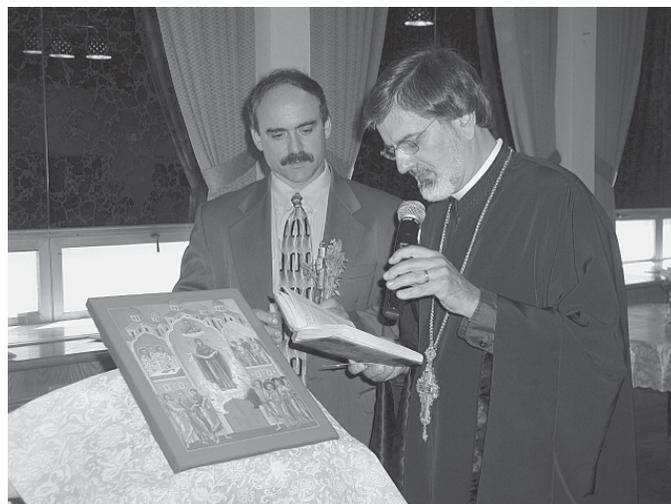
Our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Benefit Banquet was held on Sunday October 2 at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Bridgeport. The Fairfield High School Ensemble provided entertainment. Beautiful chamber music was performed by quartet members Caroline Anaya (Viola I); Lauren Dever (Viola II); Jillian Churchill (Viola) and Derek Leslie (Cello). We enjoyed an excellent meal catered by Smolen's Catering.

Father Costas Sitaras, Executive Director of St. Basil Academy, was the guest speaker. The topic of discussion was *The Orthodox Family*. Very enlightening, especially when Father Sitaras spoke about the children at St. Basil Academy.

Thanks to William Balamaci, Father Michael and Matushka Lydia Westerberg for preparing and proofing the layout for the banquet book. Special thanks to George



*Children working hard for the OCA's Christmas Stocking Project at Christ the Savior Church in Southbury, CT*



*Fr. Dimitrios Rachachinas blesses an icon of the Protection of the Theotokos which will be the patronal feastday of FORCC.*

**CHANCELLOR FROM 9**

tary giving in support of the Church on every level- in our parishes, our diocese and in our Orthodox Church in America.

Thanks to Matushka Cindy Voytovich, *ONE Stewards* director and to Deacon Paul Nimchek, *ONE Stewards* treasurer and record keeper.

***Diocesan Council and Officers***

The Diocesan Council met four 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.

"Thank you!" to the members of the diocesan council and especially: to diocesan treasurer Protodeacon Paul Nimchek, and to diocesan secretary Father John Hopko. Thanks to Father Steven and Matushka Cindy Voytovich for leading the diocesan choir director training program. Thanks to Father John Hopko, diocesan youth director and Youth Rally administrator. Thanks to Father John Dresko, director of diocesan communications, including 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 Mark Sherman, and Father John Dresko, and to the dean of our diocesan missions, Father John Kreta.

Those of you with a long tenure in New England will remember that when we had a ruling bishop residing in our diocese a separate chancellor's report on diocesan and church life was unnecessarily redundant.

Having spoken with His Grace, and being in full agreement, at future assemblies there will be no separate chancellor's report. Rather, the hierarch's report will address matters of parish, diocesan and national church life. To that end, and to the relief of all, this year's report is briefer than usual. I pray that our diocesan family will grow in faith, in love and in spiritual understanding.

And I ask your forgiveness if I have offended or sinned against parishes, clergy or diocesan faithful during the course of the year. 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 FROM 11**

Fatse for donating and printing the banquet book, and to Matushka Lydia Westerberg of Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church in New Haven for directing the singing of the prayers and national anthem.

The Senior Living Committee is currently investigating the various types of facilities and services available for seniors (senior housing communities to full service nursing homes).

Preliminary discussions have begun regarding a second Sunday School Seminar to be held next spring.

- submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

**MESSAGE FROM 1**

receive them with the same great joy.

As we begin our journey together in the Diocese of New England, I ask you to pray that the newborn Child enliven all of us and that the humility of the manger, rewarded in the glory of the coming of Christ, be manifest in our lives.

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

With love in Christ,

†NIKON

Bishop of Boston, New England  
and the Albanian Archdiocese

**ONE-Orthodox New England**

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