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A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP NIKON

My Dear Brothers and Sisters

Christ is in our midst. HE is and always shall be.

This is the first issue of ONE in almost two years and I am grateful that we are once again back on track with our publication. We anticipate that our issues will arrive on a bi monthly basis.

Communication has been lacking not only in our diocese but from our national church as well. It is obvious that lack of communication has plagued our church for some time now. But communication is essential whether it is from our national church or between our parishes. However, of all that is communicated by the Church, the most important is our communication of the Good News of the Gospel to the world; a world full of people that are yearning for Christ to enter and guide their lives. It is our task as Orthodox Christians to preach and convey the never changing truth and Love of Christ that is so lacking in a society with ever changing values and mores.

Within the Orthodox Church in America, there has been a growing obsession with talk about crisis. And in truth, there have been serious problems in the central administration of the Church. Significant amounts of money have been lost, and the former Chancellor is being tried in a Spiritual Court for his role in the mishandling of church funds. These are very serious issues, and they cannot simply be 'swept under the rug,' because these problems

have caused a great deal of pain and suffering in the Church. Hard questions still have yet to be asked, and honest answers must be given in order for us to allow Christ to heal and strengthen us.

In response to the issues of financial misconduct, a great deal of work has been done to restructure the way the Chancery and its new staff conduct the business of the Orthodox Church in America. Numerous people, including our own Deacon John Zarras, one of our diocesan representatives to the Metropolitan Council, have worked heroically to help reform the central administration. Our clergy representative, Father Mark Sherman, as well as the representative from our sister (Albanian) diocese, worked together and displayed determined initiative during the deliberations at the Metropolitan Council to effect meaningful change.

Bishop to 2



YOUTH RALLY! AUGUST 2007

Fr. John Hopko, Director of Youth, has announced that the dates for Youth Rally 2007 are August 13-18th in New Hampshire. Rally is held at the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston Camp and Retreat Center located in Contoocook, New Hampshire,

approximately 90 miles from Boston. According the Diocesan Guidelines for Youth Rally, all diocesan youth who have completed fifth grade and have not yet celebrated their eighteenth birthday are eligible to attend the Youth Rally. Adult volunteers are

needed to serve as cabin and activity counselors. Registration packets will be distributed to all diocesan parishes. For more info you may contact Fr. John Hopko at (860) 582-3631 saintcyril@snet.net

SUMMER MISSIONS

“...GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.”

This summer the Diocese of New England will send eighteen missionaries abroad to spread the good news of Jesus Christ through teaching, preaching and charitable work. Sixteen missionaries from the Diocese will be work-

Latanzi; Anna-Marie Unschuld, Ana Cristina Bush and Joanna Knudsen. They carry on a rich tradition of missionary work through Project Mexico which began its charitable ministry in 1988 and has built hundreds of homes for the poor. In 1996 St. Innocent Orphanage was opened, ministering to the needs of homeless teenage boys in Tijuana. To date volunteers from 43 of the 50 states and eleven countries have participated in the missionary work of Project Mexico.



Project Mexico builds homes for the poor

Photo courtesy of www.projectmexico.org

ing with Project Mexico: Dn. John Zarras, Melanie and Chuck Ringa, Kari Stewart, Sheryl and Rachael Fatse, Rachael Kopcha, Sergey, Anton and Ivan Krayniy; Thomas Hopko, Bethany and Phoebe

Two missionaries from the Diocese, Fr. Vladimir and Mat. Suzanne Aleandro will be traveling with a group from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center to the northwest region of Kenya in East Africa to work in the Turkana mission. The Turkana tribe has seen great suffering great hardship because of a lengthy drought.

In the same way that we name hurricanes, the Turkana name droughts, and this one is called 'Kichutanak' which means "it has swept away everything, even animals." So dire is the suffering that the Turkana people often delay naming their children until they have survived to at least one year of age. Yet, in the face of sickness, starvation and death, the Living Water of Christ's gospel flows in the hearts of one hundred fifty Turkana who were recently baptized. The newly illumined have asked for help in building a church, so they will have a place to worship. Building the new church will be one of the first tasks for the twelve member O.C.M.C. team comprised of people from the U.S. and Canada, along with clinics, education and food distribution.

Please remember all of our missionaries from the Diocese in your prayers.

Eighteen missionaries from the Diocese of New England will be serving in Mexico and Africa this summer

Bishop from 1

I am deeply grateful to all those who have responded to this crisis in a spirit of Christian love, and have given so much of their own time and talent to bring healing to the Church.

Yet, without downplaying the importance of the crisis in the central administration of the Church, I believe that we in the Diocese of New England are facing an even more serious crisis. Last year, at our Diocesan Assembly, a resolution was passed to create a task force to investigate the overall membership trends in the diocese. One of the first discoveries of this task force was that over the past ten years the Diocese of New England has experienced a 25% decline in membership. In many of our parishes, declines in membership and financial shortfalls are extremely serious matters.

At the surface, one could say that the Diocese faces a "membership crisis" or a "financial crisis." Yes, these are crises, but they are only symptoms of a much deeper crisis, a spiritual crisis that threatens all of our

parishes, and each and every one of us. Quite simply, we face a crisis of faith.

This is not to say that we question the Gospel, or the doctrines of the Church. Yet, the pressing question is this, are we witnessing concretely to the love of God? When people visit our parishes, do they encounter vibrant communities, animated by the love of God, the truth of Jesus Christ and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit? Do our parishes stand out in the local community as sources of mercy, charity and witness? When we attend the divine services, do we come with joy and excitement, to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and to come closer to our brothers and sisters in bonds of divine grace? If we answer 'no' to any of these questions, then indeed we are facing a crisis, because the Church is supposed to be all of these things, and when it is not, there is a crisis.

Beloved fathers, brothers and sisters, Christ died for our salvation, so that we might have eternal life, and this is GOOD NEWS!

Bishop to 3



Bishop from 2

The love, and the truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is life-giving, and new life in Christ is filled with joy and peace. To be Orthodox Christians means to be filled with the Holy Spirit, just as Ss. Peter and Paul were filled with the life-creating Spirit. Some will say that this culture is too materialistic, or that it has completely lost its moral compass, or that people are no longer interested in objective, eternal truth. The short answer is yes, this is all true, but it is no truer today than it was in the Roman Empire two thousand years ago! The powers of this world have always been opposed to the Gospel of Righteousness, but that is no excuse for inaction or apathy. Rather, when we acknowledge that the culture we live in is hostile, or at least apathetic towards the Gospel, this is cause for us to redouble our prayer, fasting and almsgiving, so that our hearts might be softened and so that Christ might work in and through us.

The most important task for the Diocese of New England is for us to repent of our sins, and allow God to open our hearts to His Love, and His Gospel. There is no "quick and easy" prescription for how to do this, and in every parish the steps that we take will be different, just as the steps that each one of us takes on our own spiritual

journey is different. But it is a journey that we take together, one in which we support each other materially, emotionally and spiritually.

This summer, I ask each one of us individually and corporately to ask the hard questions about our spiritual life as Orthodox Christians. Most importantly, ask these questions of God in prayer. Where there is sin or apathy or indifference, beseech our merciful Savior to show us the way of repentance, and lead us to new life. We can be absolutely certain that God established His Church for a reason, and that reason is so the light of Christ might illumine all. And that illumination begins today, in my heart and your heart, not by works or efforts on our part, but simply by acknowledging that we are weak, and asking Christ to raise us up in His life.

It is time for the Lord to act in the Diocese of New England!

With my Prayers and Blessings,



NEW TO THE DIOCESE ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL G. ROSHAK

In December of 2006 Father Michael was assigned to Three Saints Orthodox Church in Ansonia and he brings with him a wealth of experience. For more than twenty years he served as a deacon, and during that time he taught Russian at St. Vladimir's Seminary and served as a member of the staff. He also served as Protodeacon for Metropolitan Theodosius, and accompanied him on numerous official visits abroad.

From 1985 to 1991 Father Michael served as the first Director of the Europe Office and the US/USSR Church Relations Office of NCCUSA (the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA). He was instrumental in the formation of the Bible Society in Russia, which has grown to become the largest national Bible Society in

Europe. From 1993-1996 Father Michael served as the United Bible Societies' Eastern Europe Information Officer and led international delegations to Albania, Armenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia (including Siberia and the Far East), Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Romania, and Bulgaria. His last assignment for the United Bible Societies was the establishment of the Bible Society in the Republic of Georgia, laying the groundwork for translations, production, and distribution of Holy Scripture editions in the Georgian language and as a personal liaison with the Georgian Orthodox Church.

During the past ten years of priesthood, Father Michael served as Rector of OCA St. Andrew's Orthodox Church, Baltimore MD and Chaplain at the VA Hospital in Baltimore; served on loan

to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese at St. Katherine's Church, Falls Church VA and at the Nativity of the Theotokos Church in Fredericksburg VA; and as the founding Rector of the OCA Christ the Savior Orthodox Mission in Stafford VA.

Father Michael received his Bachelor's of Science degree in education from Millersville State University in Millersville PA, with a major in Russian. He earned a Master of Arts degree in Slavic Languages and Literature from Ohio State University. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood NY, with additional graduate studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana; at the St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute, Paris, France; and at the Leningrad Theological Academy, Russia. Father Michael has three children who live in Yonkers NY: Michael, 30, Peter, 28, and Julianna, 26.



V. Rev. Michael Roshak

NEW TO THE DIOCESE REV. JASON VANSUCH

Father Jason is the son of VRev. Eugene and Mrs. Fran Vansuch. He was born on July 8, 1976 in Bridgeport, CT. and was baptized at St. George Albanian Orthodox Church in Trumbull, CT. After graduating from high school in Bethlehem PA, he studied at Northampton County Community College, and in 1996 received an Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts. In September of 1996, began his seminary studies at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary in South Canaan, PA. Upon graduation from Seminary in 1999, Fr. Jason was appointed the personal aide to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius and following the retirement of Metropolitan Theodosius he became the personal aide to His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN. In this capacity Fr. Ja-

son traveled extensively with the Metropolitan both in the U.S. and abroad.

Fr. Jason married Katherine Moroz at St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church in Bethlehem, PA on October 3, 2004. Fr. Jason and Katia then set-



Fr. Jason and Matushka Katia Vansuch

led in Philadelphia and were active members of SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox

Church in Philadelphia. Katia assisted the Russian Community with translations and she taught an Orthodox Education Class in Russian. Jason was ordained to the Holy Deaconate by Bishop Nikon on Lazarus Saturday, April 23, 2005 at St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem, PA and assigned to Ss Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church. There, he continued his work as a deacon under the guidance of Archpriest Stephen Siniari and he also served at St. John Chrysostom Church in Center-City Philadelphia assisting Archpriest Matthew Searforce.

Fr. Jason was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday June 17, 2006 at St. Stephen Cathedral in Philadelphia, PA and he was assigned to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Norwich, CT.

WHERE IS THE NEWS FROM YOUR PARISH?

If you would like to see your parish news in the ONE Newsletter, and on the Diocesan Website (www.ocadne.org) please submit articles and photos to Fr. Sergius Halvorsen, Director of Communications for the Diocese of New England. jtshalvorsen@sbcglobal.net

All news and photos are immediately posted on the website. News stories may be edited for the newsletter depending upon size limitations. *Send in your news today!*

ONE STEWARDS

Included in this issue of ONE is a donation envelope for ONE Stewards. All of the monies contributed to ONE Stewards is used to support the ongoing work of our diocese including:

Missions: every day we hear about the sadness, the suffering and the emptiness of the contemporary secular world. Your donation to ONE Stewards helps support our missionary outreach to the peo-

ple of New England and beyond.

Seminarians: The Diocese offers scholarships to full, and part-time seminarians.

Youth Rally: Young people are pressured every day to conform their lives and values to this fallen world. Youth Rally is an opportunity for our young people to spend time among their peers, in prayer,

wholesome recreation, and fellowship.

ONE: The publication of this newsletter is an important part of the life of the diocese. Your donations support its publication.

WEB: the Diocese is relying more and more on our website to facilitate timely communications.

Please give generously!



Join ONE
Stewards today!

*Financial reports of the
Diocese of New
England are posted on
our website:*

*[http://dneoca.org/
financial_reports.html](http://dneoca.org/financial_reports.html)*

ALL SAINTS, HARTFORD CT

Closed—It was a strange notice indeed for All Saints Church in Hartford, even though it referred to the auditorium and not the Church. Yes, closed it is, as a major project is under way—removal of the asbestos floor, in place since the Church was constructed in the 1960s, and replacement with a new vinyl floor.

We look forward to the work getting done at which time the use of the auditorium will resume in new, brighter surroundings. Our next big event scheduled for the auditorium and Church grounds is our annual Scarborough Fair Tag Sale and Mini-Carnival. All are invited to the day-long event Saturday Aug. 18.

Father recently blessed a new Baptismal kit and new Wedding crowns. The Baptismal kit was donated by David, Cathy, Natasha and Nick Vargas in memory of aunt and great-aunt, Anna Radin, a long-time member of Holy Transfiguration Church, New Haven. The wedding crowns

were donated by Gregory and Mira Belekewicz for the health of the Belekewicz and Slota families.

Students from a private



All Saints Church, Hartford CT

high school in the region recently toured the Church and Fr. William gave them a short talk on Orthodoxy and answered prayers. The visit was part of the students' tour of a synagogue, a church and a mosque.

While ONE was away many activities and events have taken place at the Church. Although we won't review all of them, something that continues to impact on the life of the parish is elections, which were held by the parish and organizations for the 2007 year.

Our new Church Council officers are: Cathy Vargas, president; Nicholas Medynski, second vice president; Phillip Hritcko, second vice president; Joan Holobinko, recording secretary; Mark Ransstead, financial secretary; Thomas Denisky, treasurer; Michael Stenko, immediate past president; and Dr. Chester Andrzejewski, Chris Evans, Michael Stenko, Nino Karteladze and Andrea Lichatz, trustees. Auditors are Anita Karsky and Michael Danchak.

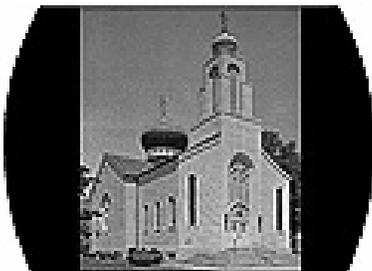
Leading our FOCA-R Club are: Michael Stenko, president; Sam Wecal, vice president; Helen Lichatz, correspondence; Susan Ransstead, recording secretary; Tom Denisky, treasurer; and Mary Beth Stenko, trustee.

New Altar Sisterhood officers are: Olga Malick, president; Monica Kapral, vice president; Linda Kolios, treasurer; and Olga Reduker, recording secretary.

Submitted by Very Rev. William DuBovik

"Students from a private high school recently toured the Church"

SS. PETER AND PAUL, MERIDEN CT



The community of SS. Peter & Paul Church, Meriden, is continuing the effort to serve God ever more faithfully

in unity and love. In recent weeks, we have opened our doors for a St. Thomas Sunday outreach dinner, another dinner featuring a presentation of parish history, and a tag and bake sale. Around Pascha, we pitched in to make a generous contribution to local families who had lost their home in a fire and to distribute several Pascha baskets to needy children. Two of our youth, Christina

and Thomas Craig, working with Fr. Joshua and Mat. Jenny, just completed the Alpha-Omega Scouting Award program.

This summer, We are especially looking forward to our patronal Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul and to the return of the "National Night Out" community party to City Park on our doorstep this August.

SUMMER: A TIME FOR RE-CREATION

A REFLECTION BY FR. SERGIUS HALVORSEN

For God's people, the Sabbath rest is not "optional" but mandatory.

Ah, summer in New England!

Cookouts, camping, lobster-rolls, swimming, fireworks, and ice cold drinks with friends...these are just a few of the delights that many of us relish during the summer months. And for those of us who have endured the snow and the ice and the rain of the New England winter, summer is particularly refreshing. It is a time for vacations and tending the garden, a time when children are out of school and we are able to relax, and take some time off from our usual hectic schedule.

Summer is a joyous time for just about everyone in New England. But for Orthodox Christians, the joy of summer is even greater...or at least it can be.

It is true that in many parishes, summer is a time of "low attendance" given the fact that so many people are on holiday. But, just because summer is a time when many of us find ourselves away from our home parishes, does not mean that summer is a time for us to be "away from the Church." Indeed, it is all too easy for us to think of the Church in the same way that young people think about school, or the way that many of us think about work. "Oh, it is something I have to do most of the year, but during summer vacation, I can do whatever I want!" While it is extremely important for us to have time to relax, to get a few more hours of sleep, to spend time outdoors and be with the people we love, summer is not a time for us to

forget about Christ and His Holy Church. In fact, with a relatively small amount of care and effort, we can discover an even greater joy and peace during our summer holiday by allowing Christ to renew us in body, mind and soul.

The word "recreation" which, in a secular context, usually means "playing around" actually has a very important spiritual meaning. The simplest meaning of the word is "re-creation," as in being "re-created." And given the great burdens and trials we all endure from day to day, allowing our merciful God to re-create us is absolutely es-



rest, because unlike human beings, God never tires, but He did rest. "So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation." (Gen 2:3) The seventh day is the Sabbath, a day of rest for God's people, a day of rest that is not "optional" but indeed mandatory. In the Ten Commandments, God says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you [or anyone in your household]; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the

sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." (Ex. 20:8-11) The day of God's rest is in fact a holy day, which means that our rest far more than "having fun." Christian rest is a means of sanctification and holiness. For Christians, the Sabbath takes on an even more intense significance in the light of Holy Saturday. After the Son of

God had completed all of His work; while hanging on the cross Jesus said, "It is finished" bowed his head and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). Then, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ rested in the tomb. And just as Christ's rest in the tomb was a necessary precursor to His Holy Resurrection, so our Sabbath rest is a necessary precursor to our renewal and rebirth. Yet, this understanding of rest is not limited to one day a week. All rest has the potential to be sanctifying Sabbath rest.

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Our time of rest, especially

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during the summer, is not to be a time of dour false-piety where we feel guilty for taking time away from work. Nor is it to be a time of semi-pagan abandon where we allow our passions to rule our lives. Rather, God gives us—and indeed commands us—to rest in a wholesome, joyous fashion, with the lightness of spirit that comes from Christian remembrance and thanksgiving. In our moments of rest throughout this summer, whether it be a day on the beach with the kids, or a week's vacation to a distant location, by remembering the great mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—by giving thanks for all things—we come to know the most deeply abiding kind of rest and inner peace. It is a peace which “passes all understanding” (Phil 4:7), a peace which abides long after the vacation has ended.

Perhaps one of the worst parts of summer, is the “end of vacation blues” when the vacation draws to a close, and everyone falls into a kind of grumpy depression, dreading the inevitable return to work or school. Yes, some great meals, fun in the sun, and a lazy mornings are wonderful. But it is shocking how quickly this sense of ease and comfort fades when we find ourselves back in the office on Monday morning, laboring through a backlog of a few hundred email messages. However, the “ease and comfort” that has faded was nothing more than the fleeting pleasure of this world, which evaporates in a moment. However, by allowing Christ to renew our hearts with His love during our time of rest, we are not robbed of our peace on that “Monday back at the office.” When our vacations are Christ-filled times of joyful reflection and rest, then we come back to our regular routines with new zeal and joy.

So how do we do this? Here are a few simple ways that we

can begin to allow Christ to transform us and our times of rest.

First of all, make time for prayer and reading Holy Scripture. It should not be long and burdensome prayer, but something brief and manageable. One possibility would be to say the Trisagion Prayers every morning, and if possible, you could even do this as a family before breakfast: a quick remembrance of our Lord and thanksgiving for His Mercy in the new day. Another possibility is to make time for personal private prayer, such as the “Jesus Prayer.” Find a quiet place, either indoors or outdoors, where you won't be disturbed, and take five minutes to slowly and quietly recite the Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” Another possibility is to take fifteen minutes to read the Scripture. The Gospel of St. Mark is quite short, and in a few days one could easily read the entire book. Reading the scripture can be done privately, or with family, and if you have children, you will be surprised how quickly they come to love the time of prayer together. Remember, the daily rule of prayer and reading Holy Scripture can be done anywhere!

Also, there is the ongoing sacramental life of the Church which sustains us, and enlivens our time of rest. If you are going away on vacation, see if there is an Orthodox Church near your destination. (All of the parishes of the OCA are listed on oca.org. If there is no OCA parish near your destination, check with your Pastor, and see if there is another Orthodox church which you could attend.) If you find an Orthodox Church, make sure that you call the priest in advance to verify the schedule of services and to let him know that you will be coming.

Finally, there are the Church

Feasts of summer.

On August 1 we begin the brief, two-week Dormition fast which gives us an opportunity to recall Christ's words, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” Nobody ever likes to fast, and certainly it seems odd to do so in August when most of New England is grilling hamburgers. However, even if we observe the fast in a small way, we open our hearts to the Word of God, and have an opportunity to remember those who are in hunger and need.

On August 6 we celebrate the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On this day, we traditionally bring fruits to be blessed following the Divine Liturgy, an expression of our gratitude to God who gives us His Only Begotten Son, and blesses us with the material bounties of the earth. Throughout most of human history summertime was a time of intense activity and work, as the crops were tended and harvested. This still holds true for millions of people today. Yet, whether we work as farmers and are busy, or whether summer is our time of rest and relaxation, we all celebrate the Transfiguration, bringing our whole lives before Christ, and ask Him to bless and sanctify us. Indeed, the Christian sense of re-creation is virtually synonymous with transfiguration. In celebrating Christ's Transfiguration on the mountain, we open our hearts to the transfiguring love of God.

Finally, on August 15, is the feast of Dormition, the joyous celebration of Mary, the Theotokos. Through her perfect faith and obedience, she became the very temple of the Word of God. She is what each of us is called to be: a faithful person who continuously listens to, and is obedient to the Word of God.

Re-Creation to 8

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O. N. E.

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Re-Creation from 7
As Christ reminds us, "blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luk 11:28)

Christ says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Mat 11:28-30) If ever there was a people who

"labor and are heavy laden," it is those of us who endure the merciless demands of the twenty-first century American



workplace. Most of us work very hard and have very little time to truly rest. This summer, may all of us enjoy a truly restful time of Christian re-creation. Wherever we are, and whatever we do this summer, remember Christ in thanksgiving and ask Him to renew our hearts and give us His abiding and invincible peace. For in finding Christ and obeying His commandments, we receive Christ's peace which truly refreshes, renews and re-creates.

Upcoming Events

July 31: Special Meeting of the Holy Synod, Syosset NY
August 13-18th: Youth Rally,
August 22: Diocesan Council Meeting, Holy Trinity Church, New Britain CT
September 8-9: Testimonial to Archpriest Nicholas and Matushka Anastasia Timpko
October 26-27th: Diocesan Assembly, Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Meriden CT