

O.N.E.

ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND

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Youth Rally 2013

V. Rev. John Hopko

This year was the 27th anniversary year of Youth Rally of the Diocese of New England. Since 1999, we have been holding Youth Rally at the Saint Methodius Faith and Heritage Center

in Contoocook, New Hampshire. This camp and retreat center is owned and operated by the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston.

Youth Rally to 3

Right: Participants in Youth Rally 2013 listen to Rally Director Fr. John Hopko speak on prayer.

Photo: M. Macrina Hopko



50th Diocesan Assembly upcoming

This year, the Diocese of New England holds its 50th Annual Diocesan Assembly at Holy Ghost Church, Bridgeport, Conn, on Oct. 25-26.

Assembly to 6

“Up from the ashes”: Helping South Boston parish recover

SOUTH BOSTON, MA
[OCA]

Right: Icon of St. Thomas, votive candles spared in five-alarm blaze.

Michael McBride lives directly behind Saint John the Baptist Church, which had been declared a total loss due to the fire that engulfed it on Wednesday, August 21, 2013.

“My fourth floor balcony has a bird eye view of the church, and every morning I would make a cup of coffee, grab my newspaper and head to the balcony to look over at the church and the sun rising to my right on the east,” McBride related in an e-mail sent to the Orthodox Church in America web team the day after the blaze. “It was a special way to start each day.”

A few days after the fire, McBride went about his usual ritual, but as a result of the roof’s collapse, he was able to peer inside the church. To his surprise, many of the icons and liturgical items survived, so he snapped a photo of an icon of Saint Thomas — and the votive candles that grace it — that had especially caught his eye.

“I wanted to share the picture I took after we were allowed back into the apartment building,” said McBride. “I think it is truly miraculous, considering the strength and size of the fire, and I got the chills when I first saw it. It really made me stop and wonder how, amongst the terrible destruction, some of the church’s prized icons survived untouched. I hope to see the church rebuilt, as it would break my heart to see it go!”

McBride’s isn’t alone in hoping the church will rise from the ashes. Many individuals have inquired as to how



they can help Saint John’s recover from the worst disaster to hit the parish since it purchased the building in the 1930s.

According to John G. Brown, the parish’s lay chairperson, donations may be sent to **Saint John the Baptist Albanian Orthodox Church, 143 Dorchester Street, Box 125, South Boston, MA 02127.**

In related news, Boston fire officials reported that the cause of the five-alarm blaze was short-circuiting in a ceiling light fixture’s antiquated wiring. The church, which dates back to

Youth Rally from I

Right: Group portrait of this year's participants in **Youth Rally**.

Youth Rally took place from Monday, Aug. 12, until Saturday, Aug. 17, 2013.

According to the current Diocesan Guidelines for Youth Rally, all diocesan youth who have completed fifth grade and have not yet celebrated their 18th birthday are eligible to attend.

Adult volunteers serve as pastoral and health staff, as well as cabin and activity counselors. Staff members must be at least 18 years of age and, if they have previously participated as "Rallyers," they must take a year off from Rally before returning as staff. As Rally Director, I recruit and select all staff members.

At Rally this year, we had 26 children participating as Rallyers, with 13 staff members and two underage children (a nine-year-old child and a ten-month-old infant) of staff members, for a total of 41 participants. We had 17 fewer Rallyers than last year and one less staff member. We also had to adjust to having 20 boys and only six girls. Just three of the 26 Rallyers were participating for the first time.

Of the staff members, all were veterans of Rally, though Julia Brockett and Lucy Hopko were serving as staff members for the first time. Their youthful energy was a great boon.

We used Saint George Chapel at the Faith and Heritage Center for our worship services. We served the Holy Eucharist on a diocesan missionary antimimension (antimens) provided by His Eminence, Archbishop NIKON. According to staff at the Center, the Chapel there is not a fully consecrated Orthodox temple. We are not charged for use of the Chapel and we are able to use their supplies freely.



As in the past, we also had the use of Clement Pond on three separate occasions. The Center provided a life-guard at no extra cost. The children and staff enjoyed swimming and boating. We also had full access to the Center's volleyball and basketball courts, the recreation center, and the campfire pit. The Center also provides snacks and fresh water.

Rally Staff

As Diocesan Youth Director, I served for the tenth consecutive year as Rally Rector and Director. Fr. Dennis Rhodes and Fr. Sergius Halvorsen again served as Rally Clergy. Fr. Dennis directed the choir and Fr. Sergius assisted. All three priests had an opportunity to preside at the various liturgical services.

Macrina Hopko, my wife, again served as Rally Nurse. Macrina is a registered nurse in the state of New Hampshire. She is also registered in her home state of Connecticut, where she works in the Intensive Care Unit at Bristol Hospital. Lucy Hopko, our daughter, assisted her mother with the health care duties at Rally. She is a certified emergency medical technician. Thankfully, there were no major health issues during the week. The only interesting incident was removing a leech from a boy's foot, discov-



Above: Rallyers at the local amusement park.
Below: A workshop making prayer cords.
 Photos: M. Macrina Hopko

ered when he emerged from the pond.

We are grateful that we were again blessed with a wonderful group of adult volunteers this year, willing to give freely of their time and talents to serve Youth Rally.

Rally Staff Preparation

Just before Rally itself, all thirteen members of the staff gathered on Aug. 11-12 for orientation. Part of this orientation was to remind staff members of the principles of child protection. We always practice “double-deep coverage” at Rally, meaning that no single staff member is ever alone with a lone Rallyer outside of public view. If a staff member must speak privately with an individual Rallyer, this is done out of earshot but in plain sight of other participants. In general, we encourage Rallyers to stay together in groups of at least two.

We reviewed the Basic Principles of Youth Protection, entitled “Be Safe!” These principles were also shared during our general Rally Orientation on the first evening of Youth Rally. Here are the principles:

- BE SAFE!!!
- Basic Principles of Youth Protection: How to Stay Safe!!!
- Check First — Do not do anything without checking with the adult-in-charge first!
- Buddy System — Do not do anything or go off anywhere alone!
- It’s MY Body — Don’t



let anyone touch your body without your permission. If you feel uncomfortable, say “NO!” and get away!

- Tell a parent or trusted adult — if something does occur that you feel concerned about, tell your parent, guardian, or trusted adult right away! Do not delay!
- If in doubt, tell someone — Don’t “stuff” your feelings: if in doubt, tell someone!

Before coming to Rally, all members of Rally Staff were required to read a packet of training materials on child protection and serving as a camp counselor. As usual, basic criminal background checks were performed the week before Rally on every member of the staff.

Rally Activities

The theme for Rally 2013 was “When you pray...,” meditating on our Lord’s words as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount. Participating clergy gave presentations on the theme. Topics included how to establish and practice a basic rule of prayer, an introduction to the Jesus Prayer, and the importance of intercessory prayer. Related activities included putting together personal prayer books for each participant, knotting prayer cords, and compiling commemorative prayer lists.

The daily schedule followed the rhythms established during the past Rallies that have been held at the Faith and Heritage Center. Liturgical services are held mornings, afternoons and evenings in the chapel. We enjoyed the fourth year using the improved Rally Service Books prepared by Fr. Dennis Rhodes. Choir rehearsals and educational sessions are held in the earlier part of each day, and other activities, such as time at the

waterfront, arts and crafts, drama club, sports and games, are held in latter part. On Thursday evening, we went on our traditional field trip to the Canobie Lake Amusement Park, Salem, N.H. For most of the Rallyers, this trip is a true high point of Rally.

We celebrated the feast of Dormition with lovely festal services. A highlight and certainly the appropriate culmination of Youth Rally was the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Saturday. We were also very grateful that our much-loved hierarch, His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon, was able to visit with us once again this year. His Eminence spent much of Tuesday with us and was interviewed by Rallyers.

Other comments

Rally 2013 costs totaled \$16,071.14. This does not include the Diocesan Youth Director's \$1500 stipend, nor the small honoraria given to the volunteers in thanks for their efforts. Staff members not only volunteer their time, but also drive their own cars to and from Rally and do not ask for mileage or fuel reimbursement. Many of the staff also meet the cost of miscellaneous items out of their own pockets and offer these as donations to Rally.

By the decision of the Diocesan Council, for Rally 2013, we kept the

attendance fee at the same level from 2011: \$175 per child or \$300 per family, for those sending more than one child. Half the children at Rally this year had at least one sibling present.

I would note that I always tell families that cost should not be an impediment and to let me know if there are financial obstacles preventing them from participating. This year again we extended the privilege of attending Youth Rally at a reduced rate to six children from families facing real financial distress. These decisions are made in confidence by the Rally Director.

This year, our actual Rally fee receipts are \$3,225, an average of \$120 per Rallyer. The actual cost is truly more like \$700 per Rallyer, or about \$140 a day. We should understand that the Diocese of New England is heavily subsidizing Youth Rally.

We also received a generous donation in support of Youth Rally from the Men's Club of Holy Trinity, New Britain, Conn. Moreover, numerous donations were made in support of Youth Rally through the ONE Stewards program of the diocese.

In conclusion, the annual Diocesan Youth Rally is a significant benefit to all those who take part—children and adults alike. We are deeply grateful to all who make it possible.

ONE +

Below: His Eminence, **Archbishop Nikon,** visits Youth Rally
Photos: M. Macrina Hopko



Diocesan Assembly from I

All parishes should have received registration and information packets via email in August. Registration forms are due October 5th.

Please note that the deadline for the hotel is October 3, the forms and banquet registration is October 5.

As indicated in the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, the parish lay representative(s) are to be chosen by election — either at a general parish meeting or a parish council meeting, according to local practice. The number of lay representatives corresponds to the number of assigned priests and deacons in the parish. Vacant parishes may elect and send one lay representative.

In order to send voting delegates to the Diocesan Assembly, parishes must be current with their Diocesan and OCA Fair Share that is at least through the fiscal year just ended on August 31, 2013. Please note that lay delegates whose parish fair share is not current will be seated as observers.

His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon wrote in his letter accompanying the Assembly information that our Assembly is the “Synaxis” of the Diocese of New England, the gathering of the faithful, especially for the Lord’s Supper. He asks delegates to come prepared to participate fully in this two-day Assembly, and particular in the Divine Liturgy on Saturday. **ONE +**

Diocesan Grant supports Connecticut Bible Lecture Series

Archpriest Vladimir Aleandro

As I walked down the hallway toward the registration table, about half hour before the 17th Connecticut Bible Lecture Series, I was greeted by Bishop Edmund Jayaraj and Hamsa. With a warm embrace he said: “We got in from India late last night but we just couldn’t miss Fr. Paul’s lecture”. Bishop Edmund has been coming for years; noting that CBLS always has a priority on his calendar.

In November of 2004 Deacon John Zarras arranged with Fr. Paul Tarazi to hold his East Coast series in our newly built church. This is the same program that Fr. Paul does in the Midwest, West Coast, Finland and

Lebanon. Fr. Paul has come faithfully twice a year since that time. The subtitle since that first lecture was: Making the scholarly study of the Bible accessible to everyone. The mission of this semiannual Lecture Series is to educate, inspire and challenge participants of all backgrounds and education levels to recognize the centrality of sound biblical interpretation for reading, hearing and understanding the Word of God. In the present format there are four lectures given on a Saturday. Normally it is the second Saturday after the feast of St. Nec-

Diocesan Grant to IO



Above: New Pantocrator installed at St. Alexis Church.

Center: New carved chandelier.

Below Left: Pysanky workshop.

Below Right: Baptism of Ivan Hale Chartier.

St. Alexis Church, Clinton, Conn., Joan Skrobat

As we have come to the end of the liturgical year, the parish of St. Alexis reflects on its many blessings. It is a blessing that there is a priest assigned to the parish to guide and lead us on our spiritual journey. Fr. Steven Hosking, as a part time pastor, offers many hours to the parish.

Although there is no formal choir director, Susan Davis, Christine Boyd, and Luba Martins have offered time and talent to the music leadership of our liturgical worship.

It is a blessing that the parish has come together to experience the joy of Christ in our lives, and to share this joy with those around us.

In February the parish participated in "Souper Bowl of Caring." The monetary donations and the chili cook-off yielded \$693 donated to IOCC. A total of 191 canned goods were donated

to the Clinton Food Bank.

In March, 9-month-old Ivan Hale Chartier, who came all the way from Alaska, was baptized at St. Alexis. He is the son of Elane and Jevon Chartier. His grandparents William and Sophia Brubaker and his Godmother Kathryn Elena Brubaker are members of the St. Alexis parish community.

In April there was a pysanky workshop led by Stasia Penkoff-Lidbeck.

The parish was generously gifted with an outstanding hand crafted chandelier for the beautification of the church building. The initial lighting was on Pascha. Christ is Risen!

The icon of the Pantocrator was also installed with the expert direction of Alex Martins and

Michael Kuziak.

In April the parish received a grant from the Diocese of New England to continue the mission of "sharing the joy of Christ with those around us."

The money was dedicated to a joint garden project with our brothers and sisters in Christ of Holy Advent Episcopal Church. The project carries the name: "Field of Dreams Food for All" a community garden in Clinton. The work of the garden project produces fresh vegetables for over 120 residents who turn to the Clinton Food Pantry for assistance each week.

There was preparation of the land: cutting, sawing and pulling of vines. Fence lines were staked, manure





Above Left: New Subdeacon William Brubaker stands with His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon.

Above Right, Center and Below: Scenes from "Souper Bowl" in Clinton.

spread, digging for shallow trench for an irrigation system of poly tubing and spigots, planting, weeding and harvesting. An example of yield: first week in August one day produced 165 pounds of produce including 14 ½ pounds of herbs, 24 pounds of tomatoes, 32

pounds of peppers (8 varieties).

In June an ice cream social was held for our church school children. We were also blessed by a joyous pastoral visit from His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon. At that time William Brubaker was made a subdeacon. At coffee hour Vladika sat with and engaged in conversation with our youth.

We wished many years to our high school graduates: Aaron Hosking who will attend Roanoke College in Virginia, and Ellen Page who will attend Columbia University.



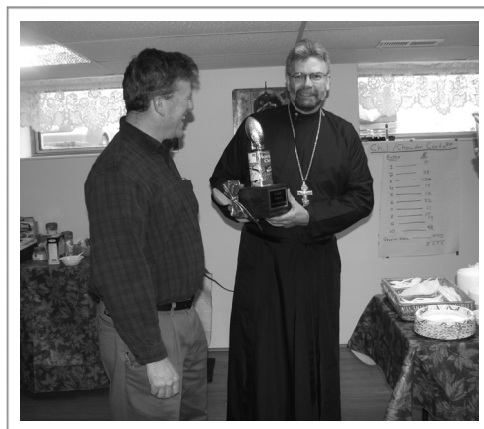
The parish had representation at the Parish Growth Ministry Seminar at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Willimantic, and at the OCA Parish Ministries Conference in Virginia.



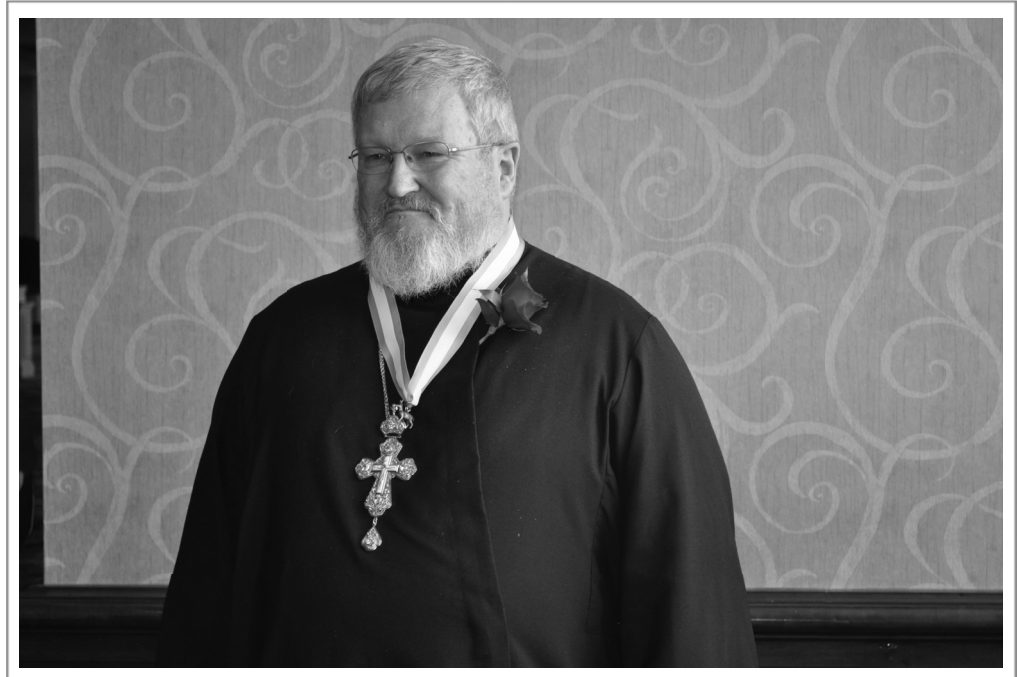
The parish wished Many Years to our former and long time pastor V. Rev. Steven Voytovich on his appointment to the position of Dean of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary. Memory Eternal to our dear loving sister in Christ Sophia (Sonya) Geyer in her falling asleep in the Lord.

St. Alexis is a community of Christians who are connected people-connected with each other by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Together we prepare for the new liturgical year and reflect on our efforts toward spiritual growth. May we all be blessed with renewed energy in the coming year.

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Fr. John Bacon receives Scouting Award



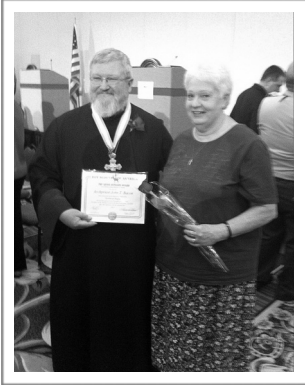
The Silver Antelope Award is conferred by the National Court of Honor of the Boy Scouts of America upon nomination by the region for distinguished service to youth. The award is made for noteworthy service of exceptional character to youth by registered Scouters within the territory under the jurisdiction of the Northeast Region. Archpriest John T. Bacon was presented this esteemed recognition at the National Annual Meeting of the Boy Scouts of America, Grapevine, Texas, May 23, 2013, at a special luncheon.

With 35 years of service, Father John Bacon, a life-member of the National Eagle Scout Association, has served as a troop committee member, crew associate Advisor, unit commissioner, roundtable commissioner, district chaplain, Youth Protection Trainer, council board member and chaplain, Friends of Scouting chair, area Order of the Arrow chaplain, Regional Relationships committee mem-

ber, camp visitation specialist, Scouting liaison for the Orthodox Church in America, and National Camping School staff member. He has served the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting as Outreach Coordinator for New England since 1991.

His Scouting recognitions include the James E. West Fellowship, District Award of Merit, Silver Beaver Award, District Committee and Commissioner's Keys, Saint George Roman Catholic Adult Religious Emblem, Order of the Arrow's Founders Award and Vigil Honor, Prophet Elias Eastern Orthodox Adult Scouter Recognition, and numerous others, both national and regional.

In community service, Father John is involved as Bridgewater Veterans Association Chaplain, Bridgewater Community Lions Club (charter member), Sons of the American Legion member, and American Hellenic Education Progressive Association member.



Father John and his Matushka, Elizabeth, have a son, Daniel, and a daughter, Juliana, plus grandchildren Zackery and Fiona. He has been assigned as rector of Nativity of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church, Chelsea, Mass., for over 27 years. He was elevated to the rank of archpriest in 2000, and given the right to wear the jeweled, decorated cross in 2010. He attended Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and continued academic studies at Cambridge College, Cambridge, Mass.

When asked what one Scouting experience has was most proud of, it was being able to serve for 18 years as a National Camping School staff member and for 14 years as Chaplains Section Director.

Father John also established Orthodox liturgical worship at National Order of the Arrow Conferences (NOAC) for the first time in 2000. It is likely that he is the first Orthodox priest of any jurisdiction to receive the Silver Antelope Award.

ONE +

Diocesan Grant from 6

tarios in November and the second Saturday after Pascha. The next series is scheduled for November 16 and will be on the final chapters of the Gospel of St. Luke.

An annual generous gift from an anonymous donor was offered each year for the Series. Two years ago when the funds ran out, we did not think we could continue this wonderful opportunity. The grant from the diocese of New England has made it possible to continue.

The grant money, along with the free will offering of participants is used toward the stipend, mailing, publicity and food. Fliers are sent to 120 addresses and there are articles in all the local papers. Notification is also sent electronically by FORCC. We use whatever publicity available.



As I looked around the room during that 17th CBLS, I thought of the fruit of the Diocesan Grant. At the table with Bishop Edmund were a few parishioners and people he had come to know through the years. Another table had five people from the Greek Orthodox Church in Danbury. There was a table of people from the Roman

Catholic Church in town. One man, a fervent Evangelical Christian, was back for the second time. He came the first time because he read about it in the newspaper. The Orthodox people present represented five parishes. At lunch we sang happy birthday

to Gretchen, a devout Lutheran and faithful participant in the Lecture Series. She was 92 that day. After lunch five people came for a tour of the church and some stayed for Vespers to end the day. On behalf of all of these people I say a heartfelt THANK YOU to the Diocese for this grant.

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Diocesan Grant assists outreach and education program

SS. Peter & Paul Church, Meriden, Conn. participated in the Diocesan Grant program in 2012 in an ambitious effort to engage Orthodox Christians and others in Connecticut, through an adult education program called "THE WAY: a Foundation in Orthodox Christianity." With the help of a Diocesan Grant, the church was able to orchestrate much more serious publicity and outreach in advance, including newspaper ads and an interview, online communication, flyers and postcards.

Our parish has run The Way two times before in past years, and we had found the program a valuable means of deepening understanding of the Orthodox Faith and also strengthening relationships. We have drawn participants from across Connecticut, and some have gone on to ask to be received into the Church.

What we knew was lacking was getting the word out. We knew that we could make newcomers feel welcome and able to ask challenging

questions, but we needed them to come through the doors. So the Diocesan Grant was a great encouragement to be more creative and expansive in spreading the word.

The program began on Aug. 8, 2012, and finished on Oct. 10. All told, about 50 participants with widely different backgrounds joined us, to learn more about Orthodoxy and ask thoughtful and challenging questions. We were also grateful for a number of volunteers from outside the parish, notably Fr. Nicholas Hubbard of St. Mary's, Waterbury, Conn. Many participants have since expressed a desire to delve more deeply into Orthodox life, whether they were already Orthodox Christians or not. SS. Peter & Paul is grateful for the assistance of the diocese, and in turn we would be glad to offer our resources to any parish in the diocese who would like to do a similar project.

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Boston Fire from 2

the early 1800s, suffered extensive damage to the roof and the area behind the altar. There was a fear that the back half of the building would collapse completely.

Prayers are requested for the parish faithful, as well as for the eight firefighters who were injured in battling the blaze.



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Upcoming Events

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| Oct 6 | Fellowship of Orthodox Churches in Connecticut Annual Banquet—His Beatitude, Met. Tikhon speaking |
| Oct 12 | Centennial Celebration of Holy Trinity's new temple in New Britain, Connecticut |
| Oct 25-26 | 50th Diocesan Assembly at Holy Ghost Church, Bridgeport |