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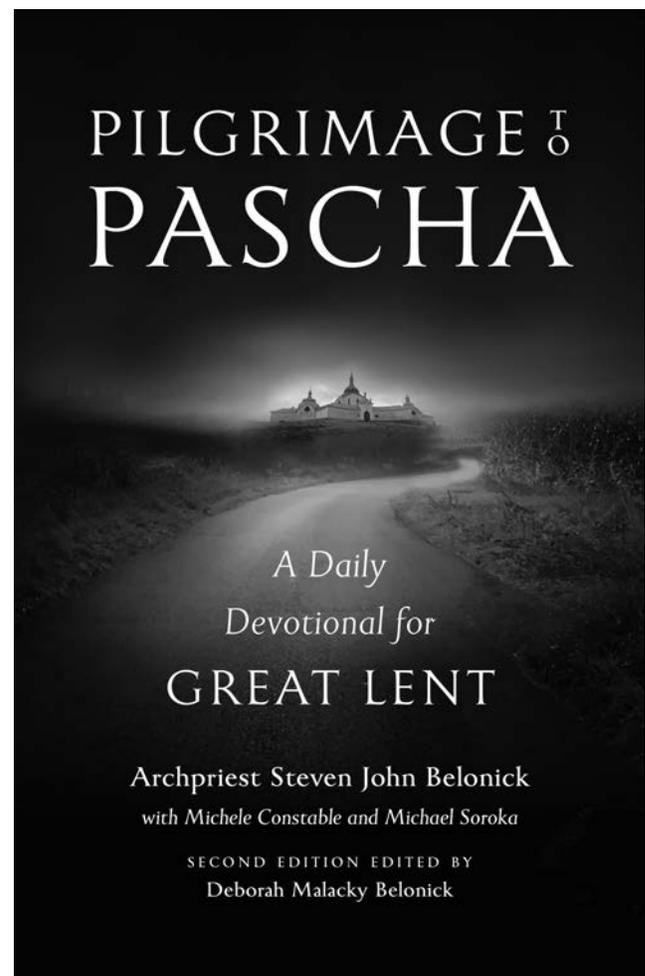
Release of Fr. Steven Belonick's book, *Pilgrimage to Pascha*, to benefit diocesan seminarians

M. Deborah (Malacky) Belonick

On Feb. 2, 2021, Ancient Faith Publishing (AFP) released a book to honor the memory of Archpriest Steven John Belonick (+2019), former pastor of Holy Ghost Russian Orthodox Church, Bridgeport, CT, and also to benefit seminarians from the Diocese of New England. The book is titled *Pilgrimage to Pascha: A Daily Devotional for Great Lent*, and it is available for purchase online at: <https://store.ancientfaith.com/> under the "New Releases" category.

Pilgrimage to Pascha is a republication of a book that Fr. Steven originally co-authored and edited. Initially titled *Daily Meditations for Great Lent*, it first was printed as a booklet

Pilgrimage continued on 5



Pilgrimage continued from I

for the spiritual nourishment of parishioners of Dormition of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church, in Binghamton, NY. Eventually the little book was published by Light & Life Publishers under the title *A Journey Through Great Lent*, with proceeds going to the parish. When Light & Life went out of business, the book went out of print.

When Fr. Steven reposed after suffering from acute myeloid leukemia in 2019, some family members approached me, as his widow, asking how they might honor his memory in a tangible, lasting way. I immediately thought of republishing the out-of-print book that had already been used by many Orthodox Christians for more than a decade during the season of Great Lent. Working with the editorial team at AFP, I copyedited the original volume—updating some sections, adding a bibliography with notes, and writing an epilogue that recounts a

conversation I had with Fr. Steven during his last days in hospice. I also asked one of the original co-authors, Michele Constable, to write a new preface regarding her recollections about the process of creating the first edition. (The third co-author of the original volume was Michael Soroka.)

All royalties from the republication will be directed to and placed in the seminarian fund of the Diocese of New England, which has been renamed the “Father Steven Belonick Scholarship Fund.” Proceeds from the book will benefit any student at a seminary of the Orthodox Church in America who is on the ordination track with the intention of becoming a parish priest. Currently, our diocese has two students at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary.

Memory Eternal to Fr. Steven, and let us ask our Lord Jesus Christ to bless our seminarians and thereby increase the number of “laborers for His harvest” (Luke 10:2) who will serve as parish priests. Again, you may order the newly released book online, or you may call the Ancient Faith Publishing number to ask for your copy: 1-800-967-7377.

ONE +

Below: Fr. Steven Belonick stands with Matushka Deborah as they celebrate the 39th anniversary of his ordination to the Holy Priesthood in 2018.



Notes on the First Online Diocesan Assembly

by Mary Jane Rodgers

The Diocese of New England held its 57th Diocesan Assembly on November 6 and 7 was hosted online, instead of in Salem, Mass., as originally planned. I attended as a new delegate and wasn't sure what to expect. It was edifying to find Christ central to all fiscal discussions and decisions. How special it was to have Metropolitan Tikhon in attendance! Attending the Assembly has given me insight into the importance of fellowship between the parishes and the strengths that our clergy share with one another.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the assembly met virtually via Zoom. Father Steven Hosking is to be commended for an amazing job of navigating the technology that effectively enabled 71 participants to actively attend the meeting. Metropolitan Tikhon was present at the assembly, along with 24 clergy, 19 delegates, 12 council members, 14 observers and 1 guest.

The assembly began with a Moleben and prayers for the departed Metropolitan Theodosius, Archbishop Nikon and others from the Diocese of New England.

Last year's Diocesan Assembly directed a committee to develop a Diocesan Strategic Plan to address ongoing attrition in parishes of the diocese. It was noted that there was a 10.6% decrease in membership within the New England Diocese between 2018 and 2019 alone. The recent COVID shutdowns have exacerbated this concern. Visionary and creator of "Stewardship Calling Ministries," Bill Marianes was brought in as a consultant. He, along with chairperson Father Hosking and members of the Strategic Planning Committee, created a 2 year

Below: Members of All Saints of America, Salisbury, Conn., walk in procession to bless the lake on the feast of Theophany. Fr. John Kreta shared this beautiful photo journal from his parish, which will be shared over the rest of this issue.



Right: Fr. John Kreta reads from the Gospel at the lakeshore.



comprehensive model for growing effective stewardship and strengthening the worship in our parishes. The Mission Statement behind this important endeavor is: “To guide and support the New England parishes so that they help people glorify God by growing in life, faith and spiritual understanding.”

The committee chose three crucial goals on which to develop their outreach and offer support.

Rick Comshaw gave a strategic presentation on these “Wildly Important Goals” specifically:

- Assessing the health and needs of the parish
- Develop and implement effective leadership training within the parish
- Develop and implement an effective Parish Ministry and Liturgical program.

The next step is to form three committees to facilitate each of the “Wildly Important Goals” (acronym WIGs) in each of the New England parishes via strategic planning, implementation and finally assessment of performance within the next two years.

Volunteers are needed to work on this outreach. Examine your needs and volunteer to move forward with the goal that you feel is most helpful to the spiritual health within your parish.

Volunteer forms are found at <https://stewardshipcalling.com/oca-diocese-of-new-england-strategic-plan/>. They can be submitted online to: frsteve@stalexisichurch.org.

Metropolitan Tikhon congratulated all for working together despite the hardships of having a bishop *locum tenens* and the effects that COVID has had on worship.

It is likely that the All American Council will be postponed due to the pandemic.

The chancery property in Syosset is being sold, which raises the concern of finding a new location for the Metropolitan and the Archives of the Orthodox Church in America.

Four additional grants were awarded within our diocese. These included grants for technology in the Clinton, Meriden, Hartford, CT and Northfield Falls, VT parishes and to Pittsfield, MA to develop edifying and educational posters for display.

Father Joshua gave a report on ONE/Communications, the diocesan newsletter, that connects our parishes throughout New England. Alexia

Tassmer, Diocesan Secretary, gave the COLA increase at 1.3% which is on average for the United States. Due to COVID the Youth Rally, now known as Camp St. Herman, was cancelled.

Fiscally sound for this year due to many cancelled events and having our bishop Locum Tenens, the assembly has agreed to another 10% relief waiver on its Fair Share assessment to all parishes within the New England diocese. Further detail on all reports from the Diocesan Assembly may be found at dneoca.org.

Much was accomplished to the Glory of God!

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Below: Fr. John is assisted to bless the waters with the cross, kneeling on a dock.



Seeking 2021 Applicants for Diocesan Grant Program

Protodeacon Paul Nimchek

The 2021 Diocesan "Diocesan Grant Guidelines" and "Diocesan Grant Application" are available on the Diocesan website at www.dneo-ca.org.

Parishes in the New England Diocese can apply for financial grants to help support outreach and charity

programs in their communities.

The diocese has again budgeted \$10,000 in 2021 for grant monies to support parishes in these efforts.

Applications will be reviewed as received. Check the website for details.

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News & Reflections Welcome!

—a note from the editor



The past year has overturned all our expectations, and parish life has transformed as well.

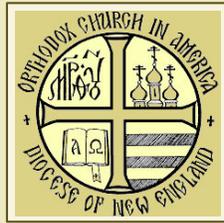
Do you have a story to share of how your parish is finding new ways to witness to the eternal truth of the Gospel? Do you have a word to offer to fellow Christians across New England? Or perhaps a photo or three, like this one of our chancellor Fr. John Kreta, blessing us as he blessed the faithful on the feast of the Theophany?

We would love to publish them in the ONE or on our website.

Please send your contribution to news@dneoca.org.

Diocese of New England

Strategic Plan Call for Volunteers



Mission: to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to assist parishes and individuals to live the fullness of the Orthodox faith, and to reach out and care for others in God's love.

Vision Statement

- D**evelop and staff a Diocesan Office
- I**ncrease outreach, evangelization and missions
- O**ptimize communication
- C**reate a vocational program
- E**xpand education
- S**upport our Bishop and Clergy more fully
- E**ncourage a Christ-centered life for all



We welcome all the faithful of our Diocese to join us on this holy journey of faith!

Volunteer to work with or lead one of three task forces in these areas:

Lay and Clergy Leadership



Research, develop and implement an effective Leadership Training program in at least 75% of the Diocese parishes within 24 months.

Parish and Liturgical Life



Research, develop and implement an effective Parish Ministry and Liturgical Life Engagement Program in at least 14 of the Diocese parishes within 24 months.

Parish Health Assessment



Research, develop and complete an effective parish health assessment process in at least 33% of the Diocese parishes within 24 months.

O.N.E.

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Upcoming

March 15

Deadline for next issue of the ONE

June 1

Deadline for submitting FORCC Scholarship Applications
(www.FORCC.org)

October 3

FORCC (Fellowship of Orthodox Churches in Connecticut)
Annual Benefit Banquet