

St. Panteleimon Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

Fr. Andrew Bartek, Rector V. Rev. Anthony Spengler, Attached

Protodeacon Robert Northrup Reader James Tilghman

Parish Council President: Nicholas Cavaligos



Sunday, August 14, 2016

Gospel: St. Matthew 14:14-22

Tone 7

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Forefeast of the Dormition

Translation of the Relics of Ven. Theodosius of the Kiev Caves

August Bulletin Sponsor

In Thanksgiving for the St Panteleimon Parish by Karen Pradun

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, August 14

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D.L. / 40-Day Remembrance /
Social followed by Great Vespers
w/ Litya for the Dormition

Monday, August 15

9:30 am: D.L. / Breakfast Club

Saturday, August 20

6:00 pm: Great Vespers

Sunday, August 21

9:10 am: Hours

9:30 am: D.L. / Mem. Sunday Panachida /
Social

NOON: Hot Dog Social @ Archangel
Michael in Burbank

40 DAYS MEMORIAL

August 14: 5 officers & 2 bystanders killed
in Dallas / Gahassan killed in Sum-
mit

August 21: Terrorist attack in France / Po-
lice officers killed in Baton Rouge
& Kansas City

August 28: Terrorist attack in Germany /
Catholic Priest killed in France @
Altar

September 4: Patti

September 11: Firefighter Todd / Alexandra
(Elsie) / Phoebe

SCRIPT PROGRAM UP & RUN- NING

Who to see: Matushka Susan

When: 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month

- In order for the program to be cost effective for us, a minimum \$300 order must be placed.
- A list of participating businesses is available for your review.

This is a great way for you to do your regular shopping and it benefit your church! Try it out!



OCCHY BLURB

FDA BANS SALE OF HOOKAH TOBACCO & E-CIGARETTES TO MINORS!

Orthodox Christian Coalition
Healthy for Youth

Effective immediately, photo ID's are required in order to regulate illegal purchase of Hookah tobacco & E-cigs to anyone younger than 18 years of age. Also, manufacturers of E-cigarettes & Hookah pens will not be allowed to promote the devices as healthy alternatives to smoking.



Source: www.msn.com/en-us/health/wellness/starting-monday-fda-banning-e-cigarette-sales-to-minors/ar-BBvnTHf

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/OCCHYChicago>

"Our wickedness shall not overpower the unspeakable goodness and mercy of God; our dullness shall not overpower God's wisdom, nor our infirmity God's omnipotence."

St. John of Kronstadt

7549 West 61st Place, Summit, Illinois 60501

Rectory 708-552-5276 / Cell 570-212-8747

website: <http://www.saintpanteleimon.org/>

90th FOCA national convention hosts first “youth council”

Members and friends of the [Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America](#) [FOCA] from around the country gathered at the Loews Hotel in suburban Rosemont, IL to celebrate the organization’s 90th annual national convention July 22-25, 2016.

Presiding over the sessions was National President Marge Kovach, Clark, NJ. Joining the celebration were the FOCA’s spiritual leader, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, and three other members of the Orthodox Church in America’s Holy Synod of Bishops: His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago and the Midwest, the host hierarch; His Grace, Bishop David of Sitka and Alaska; and His Grace, Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa. Also in attendance was Archpriest John Jillions, OCA Chancellor.

Following an open house/trivia contest on Friday evening, the business sessions commenced on Saturday morning with the opening procession and Service of Prayer celebrated by Metropolitan Tikhon; Archpriest Theodore Boback, FOCA national Spiritual Advisor; and Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak, Secretary to the Metropolitan. John Sutko, who recently retired after some 60 years as choir director at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Burr Ridge, IL, led the singing all weekend.

Plenary discussions focused on the Fellowship’s future and ways to increase the membership base in light of natural attrition and smaller parish size. Metropolitan Tikhon engaged in an open dialogue on the convention floor, during which many delegates expressed their appreciation for the support and encouragement of the OCA and the hierarchs participating in the gathering. A highlight was the presentation of a \$10,000.00 check to Bishop David from this year’s “Gift of Love” project—Orthodox Christian coloring books for Alaskan children in the Yupik and English languages.

Vespers was celebrated in the convention chapel on Saturday evening by Father Theodore and Deacon Peter Ilchuk. A dinner cruise was held on Lake Michigan, but it came to an early end as storms moved across the area, making for a somewhat “rocky ride!” Metropolitan Tikhon concelebrated the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning with his brother bishops and area and visiting clergy. His sermon centered on the Passion-Bearers, Saints Boris and Gleb, as well as the Russian Imperial Family, who also were canonized as passion-bearers. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Carol Deerson, a past national FOCA president who is stepping down after 17 years of organizing the national conventions, was awarded the Order of Saint Innocent, Bronze Class, by Metropolitan Tikhon for her years of exemplary service to the FOCA and OCA. In addition to her FOCA activities, Carol served on the Preconciliar Commission of the [18th All-American](#)

[Council](#) in 2015, which was held in Atlanta in conjunction with the FOCA’s 89th national convention.

A celebratory banquet was held Sunday evening, at which President Kovach gave her address and awarded four college scholarships. In his remarks, Metropolitan Tikhon commented on how the FOCA operates as “one big family” and [noted the presence of several members from Saints Peter and Paul Church](#), Burr Ridge, IL—formerly located in Chicago—whom he knew when he was received into the Orthodox Faith in 1989. Dancing followed.

Unique this year was a “youth council” that was held concurrently with the convention. Cosponsored by the OCA’s [Department of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry](#) and the Diocese of the Midwest, the council was conducted by Priest Benjamin Tucci, FOCA Junior Department Chair, and OCA Youth Director Andrew Boyd. Participating youth met together for prayer, enjoyed a variety of outings, and interacted with Metropolitan Tikhon and the other bishops.

“At the 18th All-American Council, the youth asked the Council for an ‘active, well-known, and central Youth program,’” Andrew explained. “The FOCA has much of that infrastructure in place through it’s junior chapters, providing fellowship, service, education, camps, and sports programs. We felt the FOCA convention was a natural place to start building out our youth program in person.”

Metropolitan Tikhon and Bishops David Paul spoke with the youth about vocation, their personal struggles with the faith and embracing their calls from God.

“One of the most touching moments,” said Father Benjamin, “was watching the youth celebrate His Beatitude’s recent milestone birthday with cupcakes, festive hats, and lots of eager questions.”

Sponsoring the convention were three Chicago-area FOCA chapters, with Dennis Garlick serving as General Chair. Displayed at the registration desk were group photos taken at past national conventions—dating back to the 1930s—and various souvenirs, along with photos of past national presidents and a listing of their names and dates of service. It was at the first convention, held in November 1927 at Saint Alexander Nevsky Church, Pittsburgh, PA, that the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs [as the FOCA was known until 1998] was organized, with Vladimir Prislopsky [later Archpriest] elected as the organization’s first national president.

The convention concluded with final sessions on Monday morning and a Powerpoint presentation from “youth council” participants, which was well received. *Con’t Page 7*

Dear St. Panteliemon Parishioners,

**St. Panteliemon Orthodox Church
Membership**

As we reflect on the blessings God has bestowed upon this parish and upon ourselves, let's give Glory to God for all things, both those perceived as good and those perceived as bad. Jesus Christ came to earth to open the gates of heaven to us again if we follow His commandments and His direction. The Lord directs us to give up everything and follow Him. This is difficult for us, me included, to understand and accept.

To be a member of the Church we must :

- receive the Sacrament of Confession regularly
- receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion regularly.
- enjoys full benefits of participation in Parish life,
- and has the duty to sustain, strengthen, and witness to the Orthodox Faith;
- to live according to the teaching of the Church;
- to participate in the religious services;
- to fulfill acts of Christian mercy; and
- to support and help the Church.

As we enter the time of year to establish our annual budget, I ask your prayers for the board and me. As you review the pledge card below, please pray before filling it out. As you do, there are several things I would like you to consider.

- 1) Did you know...approximately fifty percent (50%) of St. Panteliemon's individual parishioners donated \$1.00/day (\$30.00/month) or less to the church.
- 2) Did you know...the first \$175.00/year of your donation goes directly to the Diocese & the National Church. If an individual sets aside \$365 a year donation (\$1.00/day or \$30.00/month), \$190 remains to steward the needs of the parish. Is that enough money for St. Panteliemon Parish's ministry needs?
- 3) Did you know...“According to a recent J.D. Power report (07/12/16), today the average monthly cell phone bill is \$73.” That is not quite 2 ½ times MORE THAN what 50% of what parishioners gave to steward the needs of our parish this past year. How much is your cell phone or house phone bill per month? Compare it to your pledge to the church. How do they measure up to one another?

A Voting Member:

- a. is a Baptized and Chrismated Orthodox Christian;
- b. is at least 18 years of age;
- c. partakes of the Sacraments of Private Confession and Communion in one's home Parish at least once a year or elsewhere with the permission of the Rector;
- d. has been a Parishioner of the Parish for at least a year; and
- e. fulfills financial obligations as established by the All-American Councils, Diocesan Assemblies, and the Parish, which obligations may be adjusted or waived by the Rector in consultation with the Parish Council.

Challenge to the 50% who gave \$1.00/day or less:

Prayerfully consider increasing your stewardship commitment to the church by an additional \$2.00/day. When you wake up each morning, would you commit to putting \$3.00/day in a jar and bring that offering to God each Sunday? Try it for 2 months and see if you miss it.

Dearly beloved I understand some may be on a fixed income. I include myself in that situation. Yet I pledge a percentage of my annual \$21,000 salary. It is the first check I write. And you know what? I don't miss it. This is God's blessing.

A member in good standing / voting member is like a pizza. There are many slices that make up the whole pizza. So it is with being a member in good standing. The above taken from Diocesan By-Laws of the Mid-West.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this process, please do not hesitate to call me. My door is always open.

Sincerely in Christ, *Fr. Andrew*

CONFIDENTIAL: 2017 Family Household Giving Pledge

(September 1, 2016-August 31, 2017 Fiscal Year)

Return to Fr. Andrew - by Sunday, August 7, 2016

\$ _____ (circle one) Weekly Biweekly Monthly

\$ _____ Total Annually

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Please remember: if unforeseen hardships change your ability to give, speak with Fr. Andrew and different arrangements will be made. Conversely, if the Lord blesses you more than you had originally foreseen, please prayerfully consider increasing your commitment as a way of giving thanks to God.

May our Lord God bless you as you follow His commands!

Pilgrimage to mark 25th anniversary of Mother Alexandra's repose

The 25th Anniversary of the repose of Mother Alexandra, the former Princess Ileana of Romania who founded Holy Transfiguration Monastery here, will be remembered during the community's annual pilgrimage and patronal feast August 5-7, 2016.

The monastery was established in 1967 as the fulfillment of Mother Alexandra's dream to provide a place where Orthodox Christian women from all ethnic backgrounds could live the monastic life and benefit from the liturgical cycle in English. Since that time, her vision has been fulfilled. The nuns, the majority of whom are converts to Orthodox Christianity, as well as the monastery's many visitors span a variety of backgrounds.

Mother Alexandra also is remembered for her writings on a variety of spiritual themes. Her 1951 autobiography, *I Live Again*, will be republished in the near future. In this book, Mother Alexandra describes her life in the 1940s—turbulent times during which she raised her children, lived through Hitler's occupation in Austria and the communist takeover of Romania, and relocated with her children to the US.

The pilgrimage opens on Friday, August 5 with the celebration of Vigil and dinner. His Eminence, Archbishop Mark of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, guest hierarch, will deliver the homily at the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, August 6—the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Prior to the Liturgy, a procession will make its way from the main church to Saint Elizabeth the Grand Duchess outdoor chapel pavilion. Lunch will follow.

At 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, young pilgrims will showcase their talents by presenting speeches or poems, singing songs, or playing instruments individually or in groups. Interested youth should register in advance by writing to omtsec@gmail.com or calling 724-758-4002. The Sacrament of Holy Unction and anointing of pilgrims will commence at 2:30 p.m., with Great Vespers slated to be celebrated at 6:00 p.m.

On Sunday, August 7, Matins will be celebrated at 8:30 a.m., followed by the Divine Liturgy at 9:45 a.m.



Bishop Paul, MW clergy guests of Russian Church for Feast of the Tikhvin Icon

From July 4 through 12, 2016, His Grace, Bishop Paul of Chicago and the Midwest was among the guests of the Russian Orthodox Church who celebrated the Feast of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God in Tikhvin and St. Petersburg, Russia.



Bishops Paul and Mstislav with reproduction of the wonderworking Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God.

Bishop Paul was accompanied by Archpriest John Adamcio, Dean of Chicago's Holy Trinity Cathedral; Archpriest Alexander Garklavs, Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Parma, OH whose father, the late Archpriest Sergei Garklavs, had been the icon's guardian from the late 1940s until its return to Russia in 2004; and Deacon Alexander Koranda of Chicago's Saint George Cathedral. Also present from the US for the celebration was His Eminence, Archbishop Peter of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

On Friday, July 8—the Eve of the Feast of the Tikhvin Icon—Bishop Paul concelebrated at the All-Night Vigil at the Cathedral of the Dormition at the Dormition Monastery of Our Lady of Tikhvin. Among those who welcomed Bishop Paul was His Eminence, Metropolitan Varsonofy of Saint Petersburg and Ladoga and His Grace, Bishop Mstislav of Tikhvin and Ladeinoye Polye, who is slated to visit Chicago in October 2016.

The following morning, Bishop Paul concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Varsonofy, Archbishop Peter, Bishop Mstislav, and numerous other hierarchs in the open air in front of the monastery cathedral. The Tikhvin Icon was present throughout the two-day celebration. A Service of Thanksgiving was celebrated before the icon after the Liturgy.

Founded in 1560, the Dormition Monastery held the wonderworking Tikhvin Icon, which had been discovered by fishermen on Lake Ladoga in 1383—70 years before the fall of Constantinople. Tradition holds that the original icon was the work of the Evangelist Luke. In the fifth century it was moved from Jerusalem to Constantinople, where it was enshrined in the Church of the Virgin Mary in the city's Blachernae district. The icon remained in the Dormition Monastery until it was closed—and subsequently destroyed—by the Soviet authorities in the 1920s. During WW II the icon was taken to Latvia in the face of Nazi Advances into northern Russia. **Con't Page next page**

Prayer List

Prizsts: Anthony Spenglar, John Kuchta, Fr. James Gleason (*Fr.'s spiritual father*), ***Ted Bobosh**, ***Moses Berry**, ***John Magramm**, John Duranko, Dean, Archimandrite Vladimir, ***Joseph Gibson**, ***Yves Babich**

Matushka: ***Carol Janacek**, ***Christina Kolenda**, ***Barbara Matusiak**, Pani Patricia Duranko,

Parishioners: Karen Muzyka, Ronald Stachowiak, Rebecca Eggers, Sonja Harris, Pauline, Marilyn, Jason Kimbauer

Parishioner's Friends / Family: Donna Parhas (*Nick's Cousin*), Ron (*Mark's Friend*), Mary Ann Magerko, John Magerko, Stephen Holly & Walter Litzie (*Fr.'s cousin*), George Cavaligos (*Nick's brother*), Christos Parhas (*Nick's cousin*), Constantine Cavaligos (*Nick's dad*), John Hartel (*Joann's Step-dad*), Sandra (*Karen's sister*), Erika Northrup, Mark Svava, Mary Northrup, Dianne Northrup, Raymond Northrup, Joey Krush, Carol Bregin (*Friend of Lynn*), Jan Kost, (*Linda's sister*) Ann Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), George Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), Bruce (*Fr. Kurt's brother*), Daniel Tiani (*friend of Beccy Eggers*), Vivian (*friend of Beccy Eggers*), Julianna (*Hruban Family*), June, James (*Hruban Family*), Tommy, Jimmy, **Jacob, Emilian, Joyce, John, Robert, William & Dana, Mark, Eve** (*Spengler Family*), Tony (*Marcia's Brother*), Lauren (*Fr. Andrew's cousin*), Eddie (*Fr. Andrew's cousin*), Roger Seglem, Chris Rios

Other Requests: Lucille (*Duke*), Dianne (*Bill Rudolph*), Elizabeth Lilos, Jemsey Pradun, Mae Joanna Bass, Hermenegil (*Neighbor*), Lidiya (*Neighbor*), Cathleen Rebollar, ***John Sedor**, * **Daria Petrykowski**, Emily & Scott preparing for marriage ***Cynthia Koranda**, Adrianna & her newborn Janiah, Rebecca & her unborn baby, Janet Nickolaou

Military: Fr. Herman, Fr. Gregory, Amber, Caleb, Nicholas, David, Timothy, Robert, Kristen, Matthew, Brian, Daniel, Joseph, Antonio

Captives: Metropolitan Paul (*Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo*), Archbishop John (*Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo*)

For the UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria / Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world / Those held captive throughout the world.

Additions or removals from the list? Please notify Fr. Andrew. (***Bishop Request**)

Tikhvin Icon Con't

In 1949, His Grace, Bishop John [Garklavs] of Riga [later Archbishop of Chicago] brought the icon with him to the US, where for many years it was enshrined in Chicago's Holy Trinity Cathedral. After Archbishop John's death in 1982, his adopted son, Father Sergei, was the icon's guardian until it was returned to the Tikhvin Monastery in 2004.

At the conclusion of the festal Liturgy, Metropolitan Varsonofy read greetings from His Holiness, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, in which he recounted the numerous occasions throughout history when the Mother of God interceded for the Russian people, especially during the years of severe tribulation. "The Mother of God showed her love and care for us through the centuries," he recalled. "Thank God this image has returned to Russia! We can kneel and open our hearts before the Heavenly Queen, to pray to her, to recite hymns and to sing troparia. What she has done for us serves our salvation."

"Today the city of Tikhvin is rejoicing," Bishop Mstislav added. "Today an assembly of bishops, a great many priests and hundreds of worshippers venerate the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God. Present here with us today are our guests from Chicago – Bishop Paul, Archbishop Peter and Archpriest Alexander, a son of Archpriest Sergiy Garklavs, the long-time guardian of the Tikhvin Icon.

"The icon has returned to the place in which it was found many centuries ago," Bishop Mstislav concluded. "In our prayers before the icon, we ask the Mother of God to help the monastery, the whole Church of Russia and all our people," adding that Bishop Paul had brought with him a piece of soil from the grounds of Chicago's Holy Trinity Cathedral. "The cathedral was built by the first holy martyr of the Petersburg region—Saint Archpriest Ioann Kochurov—with the blessing of Saint Bishop Tikhon, the future Patriarch," Bishop Mstislav explained.

On Sunday, July 10—the Sunday of All Saints of the Saint Petersburg region—Bishop Paul presided at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in Saint Petersburg's landmark Holy Trinity Cathedral in the Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra—the oldest monastic community on the Neva River. In addition to Fathers John and Alexander and Deacon Alexander, many of the monastery's clergy also concelebrated.

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AUGUST

BIRTHDAY	NAMES DAY	ANNIVERSARY
8-Joann Cavaligos 12-Cecelia Boswell 20- Katerina Cavaligos 28-Aaron Stachowiak	9- Retired Metropolitan Herman & Retired Bishop Matthias 13- Retired Bishop Tihkon of the West 21- Archbishop Irenee of Ottawa & all of Canada 23- His Grace Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights 26- Natalie Northrup 30- His Grace Bishop Alexander of the South	8-22-64: Archpriest Anthony & Matushka Spengler 8-24-00: Chris & Julie Walker 8-11: John & Alice Sutko

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

In blessed repose: AUGUST

3- Mary Cronin (03) 4- Anastasia "Stacy" Brongiel (10) 7- Proskovia Sonopol (95) 15- Olga Nemic (12) 19- Roman Davik (86) 22- Ann Stevens (92)	22- Phyllis Howard-Harvey (14) 23- Helen Lisowski (87) 24- Dolores (Artisuk) Howard (98) 24- Walter Leonchik (09) 25- Olga Gritzuk (00)	1952: Michael Yarmoluk Nikolai Fissiuk Filimon Lodik 1953: Ipolit Demsky Mefodiy (Moses) Rotan Michael Rizdy Stephan Mazur Olga Panasiuk Steve Koutis
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Remember those who have gone before us in prayer. If there is a name missing from the above list, please speak to Fr. Andrew to have them added.

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 (Epistle)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Matthew 14:14-22 (Gospel)

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure concludes second meeting

His Grace, Bishop Daniel of Santa Rosa chaired the second meeting of the Orthodox Church in America's Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure here August 1-4, 2016. The Committee was graciously hosted at Atlanta's Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation through the generosity of His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta.

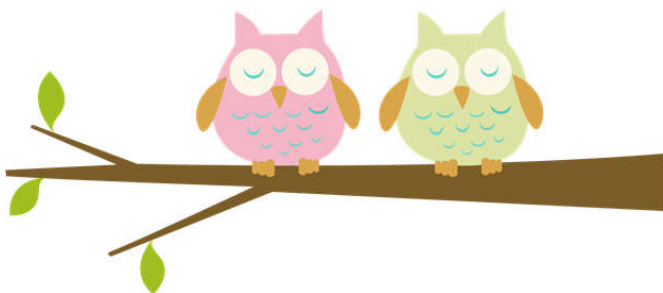
Pursuant to Article XV, Section 9 of the OCA [Statute](#), the Committee was established to develop general rules for canonical procedures for use and application in Ecclesiastical Courts. Their work will be subject to the Holy Synod's approval and adoption.

The meeting opened with a review of the work accomplished at the first meeting in April (see [related story](#) and then moved to consider synthesizing the work of the committee members accomplished in the past months. In order to make the most effective use of the available time and to consider the most pressing need, the committee concentrated on the procedures for Ecclesiastical Courts in cases of clergy discipline.

"The committee made good progress in drafting the preliminary Standards, Norms, and Procedures for Ecclesiastical Courts, with a focus on clarity and transparency for all parties involved, while still ensuring fidelity to the Sacred Canons," said Angela Parks, Chair of the Metropolitan Council Legal Committee. "To help achieve this, the committee is harmonizing its work with other Synodal documents, as well as creating templates and other documents that can be customized easily and used by participants in the Court process."

The Committee members will continue their work separately over the next months and intends to meet together again early next year before Great Lent to finalize the disciplinary procedures.

Other members of the Committee include Judge E.R. Lanier, General Counsel for the Orthodox Church in America; Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Professor of Canon Law at Saint Vladimir's Seminary; and Priest Nicholas Roth, Secretary of the Committee.



New Assembly of Bishops' publication tracks giving in US parishes

In early August 2016, the [Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America](#) released a new publication, "Twelve Facts About the Generosity of Our Church Members: Giving in US Orthodox Christian Parishes," by Alexei Krindatch. "Twelve Facts" is available on-line [in PDF format](#).

The publication highlights some interesting and important findings from the 2015 national study, "[Exploring Orthodox Generosity: Giving in US Orthodox Parishes](#)."

"Four hundred twenty-one parish clergy and 2, 988 lay church members representing all US Orthodox Churches participated in this study," explains Mr. Krindatch. "The size of the sample—nearly 3,500 respondents total—and representation of various Orthodox jurisdictions and US geographic regions makes this study the largest survey-based study of the Orthodox Christian Churches ever conducted in America.

"'Twelve Facts' offers numerous insights into how Orthodox Church members contribute to their parishes and what parishes can do to increase the generosity and donations of their members," Mr. Krindatch added. "Clergy and lay leadership will find the publication to be a helpful resource for their ministries."

Mr. Krindatch serves as Research Coordinator for the Assembly of Bishops.

NOTE: Copy of report on the bulletin board in church hall.



Convention Con't

After the election and installation of officers, delegates and friends formed the traditional circle, recited the FOCA motto – "Pray, Study, Toil, Be Temperate"—and sang the anthem "Faith of Our Fathers."

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is an official organization of the Orthodox Church in America, and Orthodox Christians of all jurisdictions are welcome to become part of the Fellowship's work and service. Further information may be found on the [FOCA's web site](#).

Understanding Death... and the Resurrection

by Father Stephen Kostoff

“Strictly speaking, a system of ethics which does not make death its central problem has no value and is lacking in depth and earnestness”—*Nikolai Berdyaev*.

“Our one and only war... is the sacred battle with the common enemy of all people, of all mankind—against death”—*Archimandrite Sophrony*.

Recently I met with some folks—both Orthodox and non-Orthodox—for what we rather laconically called a “theological talk.” The basis for our discussion was an article written by Father Alexander Schmemmann, titled “The Christian Concept of Death.” The title may not capture the full weight of the essay, since it is a look at the Christian concept of death in the light of the Resurrection of Christ.

With such a powerful theme, enriched by Father Alexander’s usual style that combines insightful penetration into the given theme, a captivating style of literary expression, and a series of challenging assertions that question our unexamined assumptions, our discussion proved to be an intense one that led us in many directions. All in all, it was a good way to spend an atypical Thursday evening.

Obviously, the theme of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ digs deep into the very foundations of Christianity. Who does not know the powerful words of the Apostle Paul: “If Christ is not risen, then your faith is in vain.” It is the Resurrection that ultimately makes the Gospel “Good News”—in fact the “best news” conceivable and outside of which all “other news” sounds rather vague and lifeless!

It is this joyous Good News that imbues the entire life of the Church according to Father Schmemmann:

The joy of early Christianity, which still lives in the Church, in her services, in her hymns and prayers, and especially in the incomparable feast of Pascha, does not separate the Resurrection of Christ from the “universal resurrection,” which originates and begins in the Resurrection of Christ.

Yet, a good deal of the essay is taken up with something of a “lamentation” from Father Schmemmann over the fact that many Christians are unaware of the ultimate consequences of the Resurrection of Christ, and that is the “universal resurrection” just mentioned above and which means the resurrection of the dead at the end of time with the “spiritual body” that the Apostle Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15. Jesus, bodily risen from the dead, is called the “first fruits of those who have fallen asleep,” thus anticipating and pointing toward the resurrection of the dead at the end of time.

And yet, however strange it may sound, in the everyday life of Christianity and Christians in our time there is little room for this faith. It is as though obscured, and the contemporary Christian, without being cognizant of it, does not reject it, but somehow skirts about it, and does not live the faith as did the first Christians.

If he attends church, he of course hears in the Christian service the ever resounding joyous confirmations: “trampling down death by death,” “death is swallowed up by victory,” “life reigns,” and “not one dead remains in the grave.”

But ask him what he really thinks about death, and often (too often alas) you will hear some sort of rambling affirmation of the immortality of the soul and its life in some sort of world beyond the grave, a belief that existed even before Christianity. And that would be in the best of circumstances. In the worst, one would be met simply by perplexity and ignorance, “You know, I have never really thought about it.”

Father Schmemmann is not speaking of non-believers in the bodily Resurrection of Christ, but of an unfortunate transformation of Christian thought about death itself and the impact of that unfortunate transformation on the understanding of the body, or of the relationship between “body and soul.”

Basically, Christians have resorted to a kind of warmed-up Platonism that claims that there is a real and natural division between the soul and body, a division which renders the body almost meaningless, or as a prison that the soul needs to escape from.

In opposition to this dualism, the Church’s Symbol of Faith (the Nicene Creed) affirms our belief in “the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” This is far from merely claiming a vague belief in the “immortality of the soul.” Again, this is a resort to pre-Christian modes of thought and this way of thinking is foreign to the Biblical revelation. Here is how Father Schmemmann puts it:

Indeed, all non-Christian, all natural religions, all philosophies are in essence occupied with our “coming to terms” with death and attempt to demonstrate for us the source of immortal life, of the immortal soul in some sort of alien world beyond the grave. Plato, for example, and countless followers after him teach that death is a liberation from the body which the soul desires; and in this circumstance faith in the resurrection of the body not only becomes unnecessary, but also incomprehensible, even false and untrue.

Such a pre- or non-Christian way of thinking will make us blind to the Apostle Paul’s affirmation that death is the “last enemy,” and that God desires the whole person—both body and soul—to be saved and transformed in the Kingdom of God. Such a belief even renders the Resurrection of Christ as a kind of superfluous miraculous event that does not really affect our destiny.

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