

And He shall have dominion from sea
to sea and from the river to the ends of
the earth (Ps 71.8)



Et il dominera de la mer à la mer, et
depuis le fleuve jusqu'aux extrémités de la
terre (Ps 71.8)

CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

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Evaluating the Maturity of Orthodoxy in North America

by the Most Reverend PETER, Archbishop of New York & New Jersey

[The following was published as "How Mature Is Our Church in This Country?" in the Fall, 1991 issue of Jacob's Well, the newspaper of the Diocese of New York & New Jersey, OCA. Bishop SERAPHIM believes the message is important for us in the Archdiocese of Canada to read and to think about.-ed.]

Trying to evaluate the maturity of the Orthodox Church in our country is not any easy task. Yet, I have noticed two opposite approaches. There are those who view the future of Orthodoxy in America with a definite pessimism, and others who show an unqualified optimism. I do not share either of these two views, but in seeking to examine our flaws and deficiencies, I think it is useful to consider a threefold distinction: 1) What are the flaws common to the entire Orthodox Church nowadays? 2) What are those which are found in almost all "jurisdictional" bodies in this country? 3) Which seem to be specific to the OCA?

To be sure, I can only deal very briefly with respect to the first point, which would actually require a large and comprehensive study. I will make only a short comment. In spite of the laudable attempts of many, it seems extremely difficult to reach a real consensus about important issues facing the contemporary Church. While every Patriarchate and autocephalous Church pays lip service to the need of unity, on the level of conscious decision, almost nothing is achieved. The present situation in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East does not objectively favor concerns going beyond the internal situation of each of those Churches. We in America get the feeling that except for material support, those Churches have no real interest in our problems. Even the use of the term "Diaspora" is in itself very symbolic of this attitude.

On the second point, the Orthodox Church in this country is not homogeneous. Except for native Alaskans, the bulk of the Orthodox in America are composed of descendants of immi-

grants with, mainly but not exclusively for the OCA, the addition of converts. Let us keep in mind that in the very organized Roman Catholic Church, this situation had created, until the very recent past, a lot of serious problems which have been solved by the authority of the Roman See. Furthermore, the Bolshevik revolution in Russia had tragic consequences for the initial pattern of canonical unity in America.

One of the most common ills among all the Orthodox bodies in America is the weakness of our basic Church structure, i.e. the diocese. The tendency is to center church life on the parish, and within the parish itself on the laity. To be sure, very noticeable progress has been accomplished. Nevertheless, the idea that the pastor is no more than a "spiritual advisor" has not been completely erased.

With regard to the issue of ethnicity, my feelings are clear: this is partly an artificial problem. This opinion can, at first glance, look paradoxical. The mission of the Church, according to the last words of our Lord before His ascension, is to proclaim the evangelical message to all nations. If this priority is not forgotten, the issue of ethnicity is secondary and flexibility is needed. The parish community cannot be an ethnic club; however, the problem of language and culture should be approached in a pragmatic way responding to the real necessity of the community.

One should also keep in mind that, with few exceptions, the descendants of immigrants from the second generation onward have generally a poor knowledge of the language of their ancestors. Furthermore, when visiting the "Old Country" they realize how stereotyped their vision of it has become. Contemporary Russians do not play the "balalaika" and modern Greeks do not wear "fustanella." At the same time, visitors can see how deeply piety is maintained in the old country, and how many religious customs which are strictly kept by the believers there, but seem to have fallen into oblivion in America. They can also observe the fundamental role of monasticism as part and parcel of genuine Orthodoxy.

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To be sure, this raises the fundamental question about Orthodoxy in America: to what extent must our religion keep the traditions of Orthodoxy in the East? What kind of adjustments can we accomplish without betraying our heritage? We have even to be careful in using the term "heritage" because I have noticed that in America this word is frequently misused. It has a connotation that emphasizes folklore and cultural heritage. Religion is only a part of this heritage. As a result of this wrong vision, when, in the third generation, this cultural heritage vanishes, so does the Orthodox Faith. Conserving as a whole the Holy Orthodox Tradition and all the customs of the Old Countries is pure utopianism.

Nevertheless, we must avoid falling into a trap: we cannot keep the Orthodox doctrine and worship completely disconnected from their historical framework, disregarding all our traditions. Otherwise, Orthodoxy would become an atrophied form of religion. But immediately a question arises: Who will determine which traditions ought to be kept, and which customs are irrelevant? That is precisely the task of the pastors of the Church and especially of the bishops to whom this mission is entrusted.

Finally, what is the degree of maturity of the Orthodox Church in America? I think that it would be very presumptuous to give a definitive answer because our Church is in a very special position. We have been proclaimed by our Mother Church, the Patriarchate of Moscow, to be an "autocephalous entity." The status of autocephaly implies territoriality; however, no other Church, even those who have recognized "de jure" or "de facto" this status, has for the foreseeable future any intention of joining the OCA.

This has created a unique situation. In the OCA herself, especially among the hierarchs, two kinds of extreme stands exist: some disregard completely the wording of the tomos of autocephaly and have a tendency to consider that, as the local Church, we may to a large extent ignore the other jurisdictions. On the other hand, there are those who regard our Church as a jurisdictional entity among the other Churches. By the way, in the best case, this is how we are perceived by other jurisdictions. To be honest, if we did not accept this position on a practical level, we would be completely isolated, not only vis-a-vis the other canonical jurisdictions, but also vis-a-vis other Christian confessions. I am aware of the fact that such a sectarian position would please some people because it would give us the opportunity to air our opinion in every area. That is of course true, but who would pay attention to positions?

I would like to make one point clear, not only because I am a hierarch of the OCA and the Chairman of the Department of External Affairs, but because it is my firm conviction: I think our orientation is right. We are actually walking the only possible path for the entire body of the Orthodox in America. The fate of millions of Orthodox Christians living in this country cannot depend on decisions made far away and with no real concern for the problems we have to face in this country. To do so would be unrealistic and furthermore in complete opposition to the letter and spirit of our Canon Law

[One of the world's leading scholars of Orthodox Canon Law, Archbishop Peter goes on to mention a few points relating to that law and autocephaly in America. He emphasises his belief that although we "must remain in close relations with the Churches in the Old World, and when necessary, support them, especially when they need our help," our primary focus should be "on the pastoral needs of America."]

I would not finish my remarks without underscoring a good many positive developments now occurring in our Church under the wise guidance of our Primate, Metropolitan Theodosius. For twelve years now I have been a member of the Episcopacy of the OCA and I have noticed many improvements. First and foremost, congregationalism is in decline, albeit not completely extinguished. Although we know it would be premature to speak of the end of a decreasing membership, we have to note in many parishes a renewal, especially with the presence of more young people. We should also mention that among the laity there is a better consciousness of the nature and aim of the Church. By and large in the OCA, the issue of language has almost left its acuity. The issue of calendar, although in some rare places remaining a sentimental problem, has ceased to be a major issue. Our liturgical life is slowly improving, although the lack of available translations into English constitutes a real obstacle in the quality and new settings of liturgical music. The financial situation of the Church is better than some years ago and this expresses an improved consciousness among the laity.

A final sign of our maturity as a Church is reflected by the new start recently taken in our relations with the ancient Patriarchates and especially the Patriarchate of Constantinople. To be sure, the way of complete normalization in our inner life and vis-a-vis the other canonical Churches will take time. But, I am reasonably optimistic.

Around the Archdiocese...

Bishop's Schedule for the First Quarter

For reasons of health and economics, during the first quarter of 1992 Bishop SERAPHIM is travelling infrequently. Instead he is consolidating the functions of the office of the Archdiocese of Canada in Spencerville, Ontario where he may be found most weekday mornings and later evenings. Other times in the day are available but less predictable. (Telephone: 613-925-5226; Fax: 613-925-1521)

Women's Conference in Montreal

"The One Thing Needful" is the theme of a conference organised by the Orthodox Christian Women of Montreal, to be held on Saturday, March 14 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Juliana Schmemmann, whose special interest is the role that Orthodox women play in establishing unity among the Orthodox Churches in North America. There will also be workshops on prayer, church, and family life; the workplace; society (conflicting values); and Christian unity. The cost is \$20.00. For registration or more information, contact Mary Tkachuk at: Phone/Fax 514-481-5093.

New Location in Surrey, B.C.

The mission parish of St. Herman of Alaska has moved to a new home, an unused United Church building in the town of Langley, a central location for the members who are spread out from Vancouver in the west to Chilliwack in the east. The new building will allow them to furnish the interior in a fully Orthodox manner, moving the pews out of the way and erecting an iconostas. The iconostas, altar and other church furnishings are being made by some of the church members themselves.

Charitable Aid to Russia

On January 7 the *Montreal Gazette* reported that the parishes of St. Peter and St. Paul and the Sign of the Theotokos have been active in helping to gather food, clothes, shoes, and medical supplies to send to Moscow and St. Petersburg for the relief of suffering as Russia struggles with severe shortages of essentials in its change to a market economy. The work of these two parishes of the Archdiocese are part of a larger relief effort organised by Anna Saakian and Nathalie Feodoroff which also includes companies, individuals, ethnic groups and some schools. Ten tonnes of goods have been sent in the past few months, shipped out of Montreal on Mondays by Aeroflot for free. Because the shipments have been cleared by the Russian

consulate in Montreal and the embassy in Ottawa, there has been 100% success in the goods' being placed in the right hands at destination.

Priest's Letter on National Radio

On Halloween, 1991, Peter Gzowski of CBC's popular Canada-wide program "Morningside" read a lengthy portion of a letter by Fr. Lawrence Farley of Surrey, B.C. This letter was a response to an earlier program on which a prominent present-day practitioner of witchcraft or "Wicca" had described her religion. In so doing she had also, Fr. Lawrence wrote, made "some rather fundamental misrepresentations of what we Christians actually believe--both about Wicca and about our own Faith." After correcting some misinformation concerning medieval history and culture, Fr. Lawrence concluded the letter Mr. Gzowski read with remarks stating the Church's opposition to Wicca as based on the belief that their power, though well-intentioned, involves them with a dangerous and evil source. Christians, he continued, actually affirm empowered women, but such power as the Church approves must come from "loving submission to Jesus Christ."

Great Lenten Retreat in Montreal

"Wholeness in Orthodoxy" is the theme of the 1992 annual liturgical retreat, to be held April 16-18 at a retreat house in Chateaugay. Speaker for the retreat, which is sponsored by the Orthodox Clergy Association of Quebec and the Orthodox Theological Institute of Montreal, will be Verna Harrison. Dr. Harrison holds academic degrees from Yale, Oxford, and the Graduate Theological Union of Berkeley, California. She is a former student of Bishop KALLISTOS (Ware), and was received into the Orthodox Church in 1979. A writer, lecturer and theologian, she is the author of numerous articles as well as a forthcoming book on St. Gregory of Nyssa. The cost of the three-day retreat is \$81 and the deductible registration fee of \$16 should be received by April 10. For registration and/or more information: Orthodox Theological Institute, 4381 Harvard Ave., Montreal, P.Q. H4A 2W9 (Phone/FAX 514-481-5093)

Plans Being Made for Summer Camps

It is not too early to start thinking about summer camping for the youth of the Archdiocese. The Saskatchewan Orthodox Summer Youth Camp (ages 12 and under) will be held August 2-9. The Saskatchewan Orthodox Teen Camp will be held August 9-15. For more information, contact the director, Fr. Bernard Funk, at 224 25th St. West, Saskatoon, Sask S7L 0C4. The Alberta Orthodox Summer Youth Camp will be held during the second week in August. For additional information, contact Fr. Larry Reinheimer, Box 255, Andrew, Alta T0B-0C0.

A delegate's opinion:

Should We Be Participating in the Canadian Council of Churches?

by Fr. Basil Zion, St. Gregory of Nyssa Mission, Kingston

The departure of the Orthodox churches from the National Council of Churches in the United States raises the question of whether the same should occur in Canada. Not only the Orthodox Church in America belongs and participates in the Canadian Council of Churches but other jurisdictions such as the Greek and the Ukrainian.

After participating in two meetings of the CCC Commission on Faith and Witness, my considered opinion is that this is a fruitful association in which the Orthodox make a valuable contribution and in which the Orthodox faith is not compromised by our presence. I base this opinion on two factors. One is that the Canadian Council of Churches is not ideologically committed in ways which the NCC is in the USA. It contains ecclesiastical bodies which are decidedly not on the left, either politically or doctrinally. This includes the participation of the Roman Catholics and the presence of Evangelicals such as the Christian Reformed Church.

Furthermore, the discussions, dealing with questions such as inter-church and inter-faith marriages, proclamation of the gospel, the AIDS crisis, bioethics, and the constitutional debate in Canada (to name some topics discussed at the November, 1991 meeting) have an openness at which conclusions are never assured and rarely sought. In both the meetings that I have attended, the Orthodox contribution was taken very seriously, and at one point a participant stated that this contribution was the most interesting and serious theological one discussed at the meeting.

It is clear to me that the mandate of the Canadian Council of Churches is not the reunion of the churches or a facile assumption that we are all the same; rather it is common discussion of mutual concern among Christians. Agreement is rare but sharing positions and opinions is important. Our absence would be much regretted and would, in my opinion, achieve nothing. When questions such as pluralism or even the place of

women in the Church are raised, people suddenly wake up and pay attention when the Orthodox theological stance is set forth in an articulate fashion. The kind of triumphalism which would have us walk out because we are right and everyone else is wrong can only mean that no one listens to us.

Above all, we must show that we respect others, and that true Christian humility means stating the truth but not using it as an axe to hit other people with. It is clear to me that the Orthodox are respected when they are present and speak in humility and love to their fellow Christians. Therefore, I would decry any attempt to remove us from this national forum. Canada is not the USA, and the CCC is yet another example of this.

Pastoral Notes

The 40th anniversary of the consecration to the episcopate of **Archbishop SYLVESTER** of Montreal will be marked on April 27 (Bright Monday).

Archpriest Wasyl Ostashek is granted retirement from active service as of 31 December 1991.

Protodeacon Andrew Somow is granted retirement from active service as of 3 January 1992.

Hieromonk Georges (LeRoy) is granted leave of absence for one year effective 1 January 1992.

Priest Philip Sperenza is received from Bishop KYRILL of Pittsburgh and attached to St. Peter the Aleut Mission in Calgary effective 1 January 1992.

Orthodox Books, Icons, Supplies

For information, price lists, catalogues:

Eastern Orthodox Books, Icons, Vestments
and Supplies (Dn. Tom Easton)
Box 21061
Ottawa, Ont. K1S 5N1
(613) 224-7836

Valaam Bookstore (Ms Anne Barkham)
4883 MacKenzie St.
Vancouver, B. C. V6L 2R7
(604) 264-1454

Holy Trinity Church in Moose Jaw : Seventy-eight Years of Orthodox Faith and Witness in Canada

by Matushka Eva Balevich

In the beginning, God created man with a need deep inside to worship His Creator. The Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe carried this need across the Atlantic and across the continent on the "immigrant train" from Montreal to the western plains, sleeping in their coach seats and buying food when the train stopped from merchants who spoke unknown languages. Over the years they came from Bukovina, Galicia, Bessarabia, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, the Baltic states, as well as from regions of Greece. They found hard work on the farms and railroads and in the meat-packing plants and flour mills, trying to earn enough to improve the life of their families.

In the hospital room of a precious 87-year old member of our church, I heard the account of his father's trip in 1912 from Bukovina to Moose Jaw, which had become a city only nine years before. By 1913 he, two friends who had come from the same village, and others had organised themselves into Holy Trinity Church. They acquired land for their church building from the homesteader who owned most of "South Hill" and built with their own hands their first church building on the present site.

Reaching back into the depths of her childhood memories, another dear member told of her family's early Sunday morning journeys to church: her father pulled the sled which carried her younger sister and wood for the basement heating stove, while she and her mother walked across the CPR main-line tracks and over the frozen prairie surrounding the wooden church building. A beautiful aging mother and daughter remembered waking at 6 a.m. to prepare, then departing their farm at 7 a.m. by horse-drawn sleigh with feed for the horses and a dog aboard to keep the children's feet warm. They travelled 25 miles along the road beside the power lines to keep from getting lost in the expanse of snow and sky, in order to arrive for Liturgy at 10 a.m. Recollections included wall-to-wall people singing the beautiful melodies that inspired in that little girl a lifelong interest in church music, motivating her to study piano and singing, and enabling her later in life to lead our choir as soon as the need arose.

The first written records I found in a crumbling book in the church basement begin with what appears to be a financial report for 1914. Written in the Cyrillic alphabet by the priest,



Holy Trinity Church, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

the following pages contain monthly accounts beginning in 1915 and include income entries for amounts of 10¢ and up. During troubled times, entries were followed by signatures of several members, some scarcely legible, which told me of the necessity to leave school early in order to help with the family's work. Baptism, marriage, and funeral records exist from 1918 to the present; since August 1967, all records are in English.

God in His Infinite Wisdom must have seen fit to perpetuate Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. After doing research for this article, I realise the miracle it is for this church even to exist. There was continuous strife, internally and externally. "Always fighting among themselves" were the words of a senior member. Finances were under attack for over half a century. Fire of suspicious origin destroyed the original building in 1930, along with the records from 1914 to 1918. There is an undated newspaper clipping (ca. 1936) reporting on the court settlement which returned the title to the rightful owners. (A Ukrainian Catholic-turned-Orthodox-turned Ukrainian Catholic priest had stolen the title and attempted, with a second committee, to take the church to another jurisdiction.) Two blocks to the east is a Ukrainian Orthodox Church whose members split from our congregation in 1956.

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I saw the document in the Moose Jaw land titles building which, in 1968, officially changed the name from *Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church* to *Holy Trinity Orthodox Church*. The minutes books chronicle these and other similar occurrences in considerable detail. The extent of the spiritual scars from these encounters is known only to God. I encourage any readers of this article to join a few of us who are praying for members and former members still living who have suffered these scars. Only God is capable of cleansing, healing and enabling people to forgive from their hearts, as Christ requires of us in order to make it possible for Him to forgive us (Matt.6:14-15).

Amid the strife, the church building, rebuilt after the fire, was expanded to its present size in the 1960s, surfaced with brick, and beautifully maintained both inside and out in the years which followed. The original icons on the iconostasis are as beautiful as any I have seen in the United States and Canada, even in larger and more prosperous parishes. A determined member bought four lots adjacent to the church in the 1950s and the committee built the hall and parking lot on its present site. The priest's residence was built in the late 1950s; it and the hall have been updated with many improvements since.

Isolated from any sister churches, the members of our church have in the past gained the respect of other congregations in Moose Jaw by the excellence of their singing, having won the choir competition in a local music festival because at least two musically gifted pastors recognised and developed those gifts in the members. More recently, our ladies and men are respected for the high quality of the meals and lunches which they cater for church support. The modest but adequate kitchen has no high-tech appliances, but it is no longer necessary for the cooks to search the back lane for scraps of lumber to keep the cookstove fires burning.



Archpriest Svetislav Balevich, whose 25th anniversary of priesthood will be celebrated on August 19, 1992

Migration away from the depressed Moose Jaw area and the pull of the materialistic world have reduced our congregation. Yet I know of several cases of answered prayers made in church and the small Sunday school. Our pastor, the Very Reverend Svetislav Balevich, who has served the longest of the more than twenty pastors this church has had in its 78-year history, and who is able to serve in Slavonic, English, Romanian, and Greek, reminded us in a recent sermon of the Apostle Paul's description of the personal struggle each one of us has in submitting to the will of God. He urged us to enlist the Lord's help because he knows our fallen nature. In this task all of us in all our churches and congregations are alike. May He strengthen us.

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Canadian Orthodox Messenger

Bishop's Residence & Archdiocesan Centre, 'Fair Haven'

by Olga Jurgens, Eastern Chancery Secretary

Three years have passed since the Archdiocese of Canada purchased property for an Archdiocesan Centre and Bishop's Residence. It is therefore timely to update the faithful on developments that have taken place subsequently and on the state of the property. The purchase was an event of great significance since it marked the first time in its history that the Archdiocese has provided for its bishop an independent residence belonging to the Archdiocese rather than to a parish.

The Past

From the earliest days (about 1916) of administering the church in Canada until about 1940, the centre of the Archdiocese was Winnipeg. During this time the bishop lived in semimonastic quarters above the parish hall at Holy Trinity Sobor and had parochial responsibility since there was no other source of income for him after the Russian Revolution. Under Bishop Antony (1947), the centre briefly moved to Montreal. Then, when Canada was served by Archbishop Nikon (1952-58), the centre was in Toronto where the bishop continued the pattern of parochial responsibility. From 1963 to 1981, during the episcopacy of Archbishop Sylvester, the central focus returned to Montreal where again the bishop was responsible for a parish. With the consecration of Bishop Seraphim in 1987, the Archdiocesan See was moved to Ottawa.

Description and Location

The property purchased by the Archdiocesan Council in the fall of 1988 consists of 28 acres of wooded land, a house, and two outbuildings. The house is a 150-year old farmhouse, with solid foundations and sound structure, with some additions made in later years. On the ground floor are a family room, small kitchen, dining room, sitting room/library, one bedroom with private bath, a glassed-in porch and a garage. Upstairs are two bedrooms, a complete bathroom and a storage room. The house is in fact quite spacious.

The property is located between Johnstown and Spencerville, Ontario. It is near interprovincial highway 401 (which joins Montreal and Toronto), and adjoining highway 16 (soon to be 416) which connects the 401 and Ottawa. It is thus within reasonable driving distance from Ottawa, Montreal, and Toronto; it is also within 45 minutes from Ottawa International Airport. The property offers virtually unlimited potential for the future.

Finances

When Metropolitan Theodosius was locum tenens of the Archdiocese, a fund was established for the support of the bishop including residence. The faithful were invited to send voluntary contributions. By 1988, the fund had collected \$64,092.35. When the search for an episcopal residence began in Ottawa in 1987-88, it soon became clear that this amount would not buy anything remotely adequate considering that the need was to accommodate the bishop's home, reference library, chancery, and archives. At that time adequate houses in Ottawa and vicinity were going for about \$350,000 and up. The property finally purchased was the best possible deal in the circumstances--indeed, for many of us, it was a minor miracle. It is also worth noting that Bishop Seraphim's own preference was for living in the country.

The price of the property was \$93,000 plus legal and closing expenses for a total of \$94,629.52. To supply the missing difference of \$30,537.17, the Archdiocesan Council collapsed the Scholarship Fund, thus borrowing money from itself. The agreement was, however, that the Scholarship Fund would be gradually reimbursed, a process now in progress. The Scholarship Fund had been established by the Archdiocesan Assembly in Winnipeg in June, 1984, on the basis of a bequest by Theodore Goldwyn, an Ottawa parishioner, of \$24,475. The money had been invested and 50% of the yearly interest was offered as assistance to Canadian seminarians studying in Orthodox seminaries. The other 50% was returned to the capital. By 1988, with other donations, this fund had grown to \$32,798.78.

The 'Metamorphosis of the Bishop's Residence' Project

When the property was purchased, the family of the previous owner was still living in the house and, while it was clear that upgrading would be required, the premises were livable and thus the bishop could move in immediately. Sadly, in the three years that have elapsed since, the Archdiocesan budget has not been able to provide for the proper maintenance, let alone upgrading, although some special appeals did provide for improvements such as the replacing of many older windows with new insulated ones. Because the bishop lives alone and is away for prolonged periods of time, it is not possible for him to look after things himself, nor should he. The result however is that conditions have deteriorated.

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Recently a group of people, concerned that "Fair Haven" (the name given the residence by the bishop) be put into better condition, asked permission to undertake some renovations, and the Archdiocesan Council agreed. Subsequently the group, who are chiefly from Montreal, thought to give others in the Archdiocese the opportunity to assist in the renovations as they would see fit. This project, called the "Metamorphosis of the Bishop's Residence," was undertaken because of compassion and a sense of responsibility, and the financial appeal that followed was conceived of as an extension of past appeals for the residence. The difference between this project and past appeals is that it presents a more comprehensive program and a step by step approach.

The goal is to collect a minimum of \$15,000 for immediate and medium range repairs and renovations. (The project cannot concern itself as yet with ambitious long range rebuilding programs.) Among the immediate and medium range objectives are: improving the plumbing; transforming the family room into a bigger, functional kitchen; installing in the old kitchen a laundry room and a powder room to serve the more public part of the house; transforming the garage into an office/chancery; upgrading the bathrooms, electrical wiring, and carpeting; transforming the upstairs storage room into a third bedroom; and hiring a cleaning lady.

An ad-hoc committee of eight people is monitoring the project and accepts donations from all those who may wish to participate. Cheques should be identified as donations to the "Project of the Metamorphosis..." and made to the order of The Sign of the Theotokos Orthodox Church. They may be mailed to The Sign at P.O. Box 1390, Place Bonaventure, Montreal, Quebec H5A 1H3, to the attention of Dr. John Hadjinicolaou. Receipts for income tax purposes will be provided by the treasurer of the Archdiocese.

Concluding remarks

In most human undertakings many factors usually influence decisions. Often more than one option is available and choices have to be made even though these may be limited when human and financial resources are scarce. The establishment of an Episcopal Residence and Archdiocesan Centre is a case in point and the decisions of the Archdiocesan Council are to be accepted with confidence and trust. We have been blessed with a bishop of great personal modesty and humility. It behooves us not to tax this long-suffering patience. Support and thanks are therefore due to those who have taken on the task of improving his daily surroundings. In this time of general disintegration when whole countries are falling apart, our unity in the Church becomes even more precious. Let us honour it through better stewardship and obedience invoking God's mercy and the guidance of the Holy Spirit on our endeavours.

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