

*Go therefore and make disciples of  
all nations . . .  
Mt 28:19*



*Allez, faites de toutes les nations  
des disciples . . .  
Mt 28:19*

# CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

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## *From the Bishop's Desk . . .*

### **Archdiocesan Assembly 1996**

Every three years the Archdiocese of Canada assembles for a general meeting. We are supposed to do this every year "by rights," but our economy is such that we have until now only managed this three-year pattern. This year on July 23–27, for the first time since when nobody I know remembers, the assembly will be convened in eastern Canada, in our capitol city of Ottawa, as directed by the previous assembly in Vancouver in 1993.

For the most part we have been operating on the principle that the general assemblies should be in the west, because the greater population of the diocese is there, and that the meetings of the Council should be in the east, for the sake of balance and a certain economy of travel. I suppose we mostly keep to this principle, but over the last three years we have experimented a little. Making use of some generous seat-sales, we have met as a Council twice in the west, and may do so again. These meetings have helped the local communities understand better the administration of the diocese, and have given the members of the Council an exposure to parts of the diocese that they otherwise might not experience. It works similarly for the east: there has not been for a very long time an opportunity for the eastern provinces to experience the sense of fulness and belonging that comes with participation in the general assembly. Because of this personal experience of who we are as we come together, I am looking forward very much to this assembly.

I suppose that nobody particularly enjoys the business aspects of a general meeting, which I suspect when observing the poor attendance patterns at parish annual meetings. There is a danger of letting this tendency spill over and up to the general diocesan assembly for which we are now preparing. Cost is also a factor in our considerations, especially if we are thinking of transporting a family. But, my dear brothers and sisters, we meet like this only every three years for these very reasons, and it is my profound hope that as many of you as possible will take a little extra care to prepare and to attend.



*His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM*

There is much more to our assemblies than just the necessary business. The experience of being together has a beneficial effect on all who take part, whether as delegates or observers. The organising committee has been working very hard to make the most of this opportunity. For instance, there will be a Clergy Synaxis associated with the assembly. There are not many such opportunities for the clergy to meet together for mutual strengthening, support, and going to confession—especially not often for the whole diocese. There will be also for the clergy a short legal workshop on moral matters. For lay people there will be a workshop on congregational singing. In offering this discussion of a particular and characteristic style of singing, we are in no way putting choral singing aside: there have already been two diocesan workshop gatherings for choirs in the past five years. But there are many parishes in which, either by choice or by necessity, the singing of the whole congregation is the normal manner of worship, and we therefore want to provide an exchange of ideas to help this form of singing be the very best it can be.

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There will of course be some business. We have to discuss our finances. Here there is not bad news, since I am told that we ended 1995 in the black—a first in many years. We have to keep thinking, however, about how we can get the most for the least. We are small potatoes: the annual budget of the Archdiocese of Canada is smaller than that of many parishes. But by the grace of God, a lot seems to come from the small seeds sown, and not only financially. I think that when we hear reports of deaneries and parishes, we will hear other encouraging news, even in the face of various difficulties, of life and growth in our parish families.

We will also be discussing further our interior organisation, particularly with regard to the deaneries. There has been slow but steady development here, and we are working toward establishing provincial deaneries that actually function, where possible. For that reason, we are in the process of moving from having deans who are simply appointed, to having deans who are first elected by the clergy of the deaneries, and then confirmed by episcopal appointment. This does not necessarily mean a change of person; but we will have been through the process in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan-Manitoba by the time of the assembly. I truly hope that these deaneries, as they continue to meet, to work, and to grow, will in time serve as the local parish “glue” and mutual support that they are intended to be. They can provide opportunities for local parishes to meet in a larger assembly together with their Bishop to pray and to decide matters. They can also provide a local and more immediate forum for solving certain problems. Most important, they can increase communication and trust locally so that the parish families can nourish each other effectively. This works well in Alaska, as I described to you in this newspaper’s recent winter issue. It is for us here in Canada, who make up the largest territorial diocese of Orthodoxy in the entire world, to find the best way for ourselves in our exceedingly challenging geographical context.

For the first time in the long history of our diocese, we have a permanent, self-contained residence for the Bishop and an office for the Archdiocese. Over the years, with your help, there has been slow upgrading of the property and its buildings. There is still much to be further developed, as God will bless, but thanks to the Metamorphosis Project, things are reasonably good so far. A chance to see this Archdiocesan Centre, “Fair Haven,” which is about an hour’s drive south of Ottawa, will be presented on the Saturday afternoon after the assembly. It will be a special version of our annual picnic, and will begin around noon and end with Vespers. Pray for good weather! This picnic is pot-luck. We do not

have the resources to “lay things on,” so pack what you like, with a view to sharing. The picnic is open to all, whether attending the assembly or not.

We are trying to improve communication with the parishes of the Patriarchal Administration of the Russian Orthodox Church. So I have invited Bishop MARK from Edmonton to participate in our assembly so that he can get to know us better, and perhaps help others to understand and accept our good intentions. A lot of unnecessary trouble has come in the past from too little communication and too much fear. On the other hand, communication takes a lot of time and energy, as well as spiritual vigilance. We also have strong hope that our beloved Metropolitan THEODOSIUS will be able to attend for part of the assembly, and perhaps one or two other representatives of our Central Church Administration from Syosset, New York.

The presence of His Beatitude THEODOSIUS will be quite important in itself. The whole purpose of our meeting together is to be responsible stewards of the Vineyard of Christ. The visible expression of that is the assembling at the Altar of the Lord in the Divine Liturgy. Gathering together at the Holy Table with His Beatitude will give visible expression to the real spiritual unity in Christ which exists among all the believers and parishes and deaneries of the Archdiocese of Canada, and as a diocese, with all the other dioceses of the Orthodox Church in America. However much we are going to be deciding, it is only in this Eucharistic context that everything will find its meaning and direction. And, of course, we will have an opportunity again to tell the Metropolitan how much we love him.

So, my brothers and sisters, beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord and God and Saviour, I look forward to seeing you, as many as are able to come. If you cannot come, then **make sure** that you contact your parish delegate and ask about the assembly, because it is your assembly too, and **be sure to contribute by your prayers!**

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## Internet Behaviour

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We say we believe that God created everything good, and so it is. We also understand that we believe that the turmoil in creation is connected with our sin, and so it is.

Although I say this with a certain reluctance, I suppose that we have produced in computers something with capability for good. Moreover, an opportunity for very rapid communication has also been developed with the creation of the Internet. But just as in everything else, so it is with computers, and especially with the Internet:



there is always the possibility of behaviour which can separate us from each other and God through sin.

On the positive side, the Internet produces an unimaginably broad field for instant communication. It is also providing us evangelical opportunities. The various "home pages" on the World Wide Web, for example, give the seeker the ability to find the Orthodox Christian Faith with ease. This has great potential for us, especially in the next few years in North America, since all signs point to the near future as an immense opportunity for the Orthodox Church in the field of evangelism. Our OCA now has its own home page. For any of you who have the capability of contacting it, the address of the Orthodox Church in America is <http://www.oca.org>. Here one can find basic information on all our parishes and programmes; there are news releases available; soon the OCA newspaper and various diocesan publications will appear there; and there are also links to other sites on the web.

A different entity from the web is the Internet, which also offers a tool for instant communication. Through this medium people can talk to each other individually or on various "lists." These lists are groups of people who share similar interests and can discuss those interests with the entire subscribed group. There are presently at least two very active Orthodox lists on the net. These can, of course, be a source of valuable information, support and edification, but they can also be a great source of temptation.

The Tempter is always looking for new opportunities to get in and mess around. Communication is important, but one must be very careful to be sensitive, responsible, and serious in writing in a medium where everyone and anyone, and especially in the discussion groups, has access to what is written. This medium is not like writing letters, and it is certainly not like face to face conversation.

Still more important, one must be careful to avoid the temptation to gossip on the Internet. Falling into gossip in this medium has already caused a lot of people pain, inconvenience, heartache, and in some cases, irreparable damage. There is also, I am told, a certain pressure and responsibility in e-mail, because of its immediacy. Time to reflect is reduced, and sometimes too swift reaction can be a temptation in itself. In fact, what might still be more dangerous is that there are so many people who instinctively react to whatever is in print as if it were fact and truth by virtue of its being in print. Here is where the real responsibility lies for those who write—knowing this vulnerability and being compassionately sensitive about it. Such vulnerability, I might add, is found as often in the well-educated as in those who are less so.

The principle of our Holy Fathers is that communication should always be *good*. Silence is preferable to gossip.

I am not yet available by e-mail. Living in the country away from certain conveniences slows things down. So does the perpetual travel. When I do have an e-mail address, you will hear about it. In the mean time, I want all to be aware of the responsibility that comes with this utility, and most particularly of the spiritual elements therein. All things which are good can be twisted or misused by us. They can also be used to God's glory—and may that be always!

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## Confession

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I want to share some extracts from a meditation by one of our priests on the subject of confession. In these days of self-help groups, there is an increasing awareness of the need for confession as part of the process of overcoming addictions. But these self-help groups, though sometimes useful, do not take things far enough for real healing, because they are necessarily too general and all-embracing. For Orthodox Christians, the avenue of Confession offers precisely what is missing, and in the end also offers the possibility of real healing in Jesus Christ.

For many persons, especially those in the middle of life, "chickens come home to roost," as we say. The unforgiven sins of the past demand attention, and sometimes they demand it at the expense of everything else. These sins involve things that have been done to us, or which we think have been done to us, as well as the things we have done. Many of these things, because of the intensity of pain or fear at the time, may have been buried for a long time. But, like a festering wound, the pus comes to the surface sooner or later. Have we properly repented in the past? For what we have done, said, or thought wrong about or to others, it is not too late to clean it up. Have we not completely forgiven those who have wounded us in the past (even if it is only that we perceived, however incorrectly, that we were wounded)? These are things for which it is necessary for us to "take responsibility" ourselves, just as the modern psychologists say. But then what? Knowing about past sins, past wrongs, is only the beginning. What was wrong has to be righted, and it is only in and with the help of the Lord Jesus Christ that this can be done.

Many suffer precisely because of stored-up pain. This in itself suggests the benefit of going regularly to confession. By doing an honest interior clean-up, taking responsibility for our sins day-by-day, week-by-week,

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month-by-month, we can perhaps avoid mid-life crises which result from accepting tempting lies and believing them, and from hiding in fear. All this is darkness, and we should be living in the Light of Jesus Christ.

When we go to the sacrament of Confession, we make the confession to our Lord Himself. The priest standing beside us is a witness, as the service says. He is also an encouragement, because he represents all our other brothers and sisters who, together with him, are also sinners in the same mess, and in the same need for reconciliation with the Lord and each other. Often enough, sinner though the priest may be, the Lord will use him to speak straight to our hearts, straight to our needs, and to touch us with love through his words, even if he is totally unaware of it. This is part of the mystery of God's love for us.

We were created to be, and are called to be holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). To be holy requires daily monitoring of our hearts, and daily turning away from sin and toward righteousness. Let us remember our first parents, Adam and Eve. They were not honest about their sin and, beginning to lie, they tried to shift blame and responsibility to someone else. Sound familiar? How dare we judge them, when we do no better? We have to begin to own up to what we did before it can be cleaned up properly. In order to begin to do that, we first need to put some nourishing elements into our lives: regular, daily prayer; Bible reading on a daily basis; readings from our holy fathers and mothers; trying to keep focussed during worship. These things help us to "grow up."

Let us pay attention to the Apostle Paul's teaching about love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7), and then ask ourselves about ourselves in that light. Here is our priest's meditation, which may be very useful:

**Love is patient.** Have I been impatient with anyone?

**Love is kind.** Have I been unkind to anyone? Have I failed to be kind to anyone by just doing nothing, like not helping when I could have?

**Love is not boastful.** Do I brag about myself, my possessions, my accomplishments? Do I make others feel small and unimportant? Do I forget that everything I have and everything I am comes, ultimately, as a gift from God; and do I instead take for myself the credit, the glory, that belongs to God?

**Love is not arrogant.** Do I think that I'm "somebody"; that I'm better than someone else; that somehow the world revolves around me; that only what I think, and what I feel, what I need, what I want are truly important?

**Love is not rude.** Have I been rude to anyone; cruel to anyone? Have I ignored or been insensitive to another's feelings, need, or hurts? Do I just "look out for number one" and let others struggle alone?

**Love does not insist on its own way.** Have I been stubborn or bull-headed? Am I open or closed to others' ideas,

feelings, wants, needs? Do I try to run others' lives? Am I bossy and pushy? Do I try to manipulate others into doing what I want by whining or throwing tantrums, or bull-doing them, or making them feel guilty? Do I insist that I am right, even when the Scriptures and the Church's teaching say otherwise?

**Love is not irritable or resentful.** Am I "touchy", easily offended; grouchy; short-tempered; quarrelsome; always complaining; always negative? Do I carry a grudge against anyone? Am I slow to forgive? Is there anyone I am refusing to forgive? Am I self-pitying; feeling sorry for myself; feeling hard-done-by? When others need and ask my help, do I grumble because my comfort is being disturbed?

**Love does not rejoice in wrong-doing.** Do I listen to gossip about others? Do I spread gossip about others? Do I gloat or feel secret satisfaction at another's mishaps? Do I see any other person as my enemy? Do I want to see any other person "get what's coming to them," meaning anything negative or bad? Do I know that something is a sin, but approve it or do it anyway?

**Love rejoices in the truth.** How truthful am I? Do I tell lies? Do I try to keep the truth from anyone? Can I admit that even "white lies" are a failure to love and trust others? Do I really want to know the truth, especially the Truth of God? Do I really care what God has to say in the Bible and the Church? Do I really try to practise and live that truth in everyday life?

**Love bears all things.** How willing am I to bear insults, injuries, disappointments, without getting angry, bitter, resentful, vengeful? How far am I willing to go to help others? How willing am I to put up with the irritating little habits of others? How much room do I give others to breathe and grow—or do I demand that they be perfect, and right now?

**Love believes all things.** How much do I give others the benefit of the doubt? How eager am I to believe the best rather than the worst about others; about their intentions? How much do I trust God? How willing am I to trust Him enough to actually do and put into practise what He says to do?

**Love hopes all things.** How easily do I give way to depression, despair, feelings of hopelessness? How easily do I give up on God? How quick am I to give up on myself and quit trying? How quick am I to "write off" others as hopeless, useless, or "no good"? How willing am I to "stick with" another person in trying to help; to "hang in there" and work through problems and difficulties (as in marriage or parish life) rather than pull out?

**Love endures all things.** How willing am I to work and make sacrifices to achieve good and godly purposes? How willing am I to accept problems and adversity as being opportunities for God's good purposes to be worked out in my life? How willing am I to invest my time, work, resources, caring, in working together with God over the "long haul" to improve myself, my family, my parish, my community, my country, my world?

The priest's meditation ends with the statement "With confession for cleansing, and with Holy Communion for nourishment and strengthening, we **can** become



people who actually do live up to and live out in everyday life, the most fundamental command of Christ: **'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.'** (Luke 10:27)"

Why, my beloved brothers and sisters, do I present this now, after we have finished with Great Lent and are already embarking on the season of Pentecost? Because often the temptations after Great Lent are even greater than those within, since after Pascha, we have a habit of letting down our guard, our vigilance, our watchfulness. The season of Pentecost is the time for living out, in the daily practical ways, the command of Christ as above. So let us pray that the Lord will be with us and send us the necessary help so that "from this day, from this hour, from this minute . . . [we can] love God above all, and do His holy will."

## Embalming

I would also like to share with you an important note I received recently from Priestmonk David (Edwards):

"It came to my attention that when our loved ones are placed in the care of an undertaker, they may not be dealt with exactly as we may have thought. After a conversation with an undertaker, on the way to a burial, I was informed that during the embalming procedure in Manitoba, the body fluids which are removed are usually allowed to drain into the sewer. Different provinces have different acceptable practices. In the Province of British Columbia, I was informed, it is the practice to send the body fluids to a refuse incineration facility. *Please check how the undertakers charged with your loved ones go about their business.*

"It is not difficult to correct this problem. Again I was informed by a Rabbi and an undertaker that at a Jewish funeral, where embalming is usually forbidden, if body fluids have been removed during an autopsy, the body fluids must be contained within the casket. I asked that this procedure be adhered to following the recent death of my beloved Father. The undertaker was only too pleased to comply with my wishes.

"We Orthodox Christians must insist. Our bodies are precious and God's temple. For us to discard as waste any part of our body, is not consistent with our faith. It is usual for us to take very tender care of the bodies of our departed. I cannot imagine there will be a problem, as long as we are firm in insisting on how we want the body treated."

*Seraphim*

## Bishop Seraphim's Visitation Schedule July - September 1996

26 Jun - 8 Jul	Alberta Deanery
11 - 12 Jul	SS Peter & Paul, Montreal
19 - 21 Jul	Mar Elias, New Westminster BC
23 - 28 Jul	Archdiocesan Assembly, Ottawa
27 Jul	Archdiocesan picnic, Fair Haven
17 - 19 Sep	RC/Orthodox Dialogue, Washington DC

## Pastoral Notes

Effective 1 February 1996, **Deacon Lazarus Easton** is suspended.

Upon election on 24 February 1996, **Priest Lawrence Farley** was appointed Dean of British Columbia for three years.

On 25 February 1996, **Subdeacon Robert John Polson** was ordained to the Holy Diaconate in Kodiak, Alaska, by Bishop INNOCENT of Anchorage, for the Archdiocese of Canada.

Effective 1 March 1996, **Priestmonk David (Edwards)**, remaining a member of the Missionary Brotherhood of St Silouan the Athonite, is assigned as second priest at Holy Trinity Sobor, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Effective 27 March 1996, **Priest John Bartholomew** is granted a leave of absence for three months.

On 11 April 1996, at Annunciation / St Nicholas Cathedral in Ottawa, Ontario, Bishop SERAPHIM received **Priest Lionel [Leo] Dixon** into the Archdiocese of Canada from the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Fr Lionel is attached to the Cathedral.

### 1996 Paschal Awards:

Priestmonk David (Edwards)	Gold Cross
Priest Lawrence Reinheimer	Purple Kamilavka
Priest Daniel Guenther	Purple Skoufia
Priest Stephen Kennaugh	Purple Skoufia
Priestmonk Cyrille (Bradette)	Nabedrennik
Priestmonk Georges (Leroy)	Nabedrennik
Priest Leonid Misnik	Nabedrennik
Priest Symeon Rodger	Nabedrennik
Deacon Andrew Piasta	Double Orar



## 'Windows to the East' Enjoys 3rd Successful Year

The third annual lecture series on Eastern Christianity, "Windows to the East," was held in Saskatoon on February 8-9, once more the collaborative effort of a dozen Eastern churches.

Those filling the very full auditorium of St Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan truly drank from a holy spring as Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, Dean of St Vladimir's Theological Seminary, New York, and Fr Andrij Chirovsky, Director of the Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, Ottawa, drew from the depths of their knowledge on the subject of prayer.

To Whom do we pray? Where do we pray? When do we pray? How do we pray? All of these questions were addressed within the context of discussions on personal prayer, prayer and the liturgy, the physical body at prayer, and prayer and church unity. We were exhorted to seek to know God with our whole hearts, *as He really is*, and not the God of our own making, and to remember that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb 10:31). We were urged to call on His grace to combine with our own efforts to pray, and to seek the wisdom of the Holy Fathers in learning how to pray.

Enriching, wise and filled with humour, the lectures gave us plenty to go on. As Fr Hopko concluded, "God has done all. The ball is now in our court." If we begin to practice what we have heard, the lectures were a success.

On Feb 10 Fr Hopko gave an all-day workshop on the Orthodox faith at Holy Resurrection Church, with hours of diverse questions at the end. Many of us who have not attended St Vladimir's had to fight some pangs of jealousy toward those who have had the experience of listening to so dedicated and humble a *didaskalos* in whole courses and programmes. Great Vespers and a coffee fellowship ended the day, but not Fr Tom's energy for answering individual questions with spontaneous answers. On Sunday, the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, he delivered

the sermon. His time in Saskatoon ended with a parish potluck lunch, and more questions!

"Windows to the East" has become more than a window. It has been getting to the heart of the Orthodox faith. Doubtless, the remembered blessings of last year's rich and lively lectures on Holy Communion, given by our own Bishop Seraphim and Bishop Nicholas Samra of the

Melkite Church, had much to do with the scramble to find extra chairs this year to accommodate the record turnout.

It is hoped that the series will continue, and to that end we asked those in attendance to put down topics pertinent to their faith which might be useful as future themes. We are most grateful to God for the experience of working closely with those of other Eastern churches in a faith-centred goal. And we are most thankful to Him too for the turnaround in the weather that followed on the icy heels of a -40 C January, just in time for our lectures—*Kathy Szalasznyj, Holy Resurrection, Saskatoon*



*Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko speaking at Holy Resurrection.*

## Orthodox Poets Evangelise In British Columbia

A small group of Orthodox Christian poets from the St Herman of Alaska mission parish in Langley BC have banded together to start a new form of Orthodox outreach in Vancouver. The group call themselves "To the Unknown God," and see it as their mission to attend and read their poems in various coffee houses and venues around the Lower Mainland which might not otherwise receive a Christian witness. Each member is a dedicated poet. A typical reading includes poetry, short stories, and festal music sung by members of the St Herman's choir. The group asks for the prayers of the Orthodox faithful, as quite often the places they attend, starved for the word of God, are hostile to their message. Members of "To the Unknown God" are Matushka Donna Farley, Vivien Hartley, John and Jennifer Hainsworth, Andrea Folster, James Mullin, Anastassy Gallaher, Richard Rene, and Seraphim Smith. —*Subdeacon John Hainsworth, St Herman of Alaska, Surrey BC*



# Archdiocesan Assembly 1996

Ottawa, Ontario, Tuesday, July 23 – Friday, July 26

A warm invitation is extended to all to come to the Archdiocesan Assembly this summer in Ottawa! Our gathering promises to be a lively, active and inspiring assembly. Not only will the 'business' of the diocese be addressed, but also many issues that challenge us as Orthodox Christians. It will be an opportunity meet new friends, renew fond acquaintances, and sight-see in the nation's capital.

**Location:** The assembly will be held on the grounds of Carleton University, picturesquely situated on the historic Rideau Canal. Parliament Hill, downtown shopping, and major museums are not far and are easily accessible by public transportation.

**Registration:** Tuesday, July 23, 3 – 7 p.m.

## Highlights

### Key issues to be addressed by the Assembly

- Our Vision of the Archdiocese of Canada
- Review of the past three years, and a look to the future
- Amendments to diocesan by-laws
- Special projects and committee reports
- Model parish by-laws
- Election of the new diocesan council

### Worship Services

- Moleben Wednesday morning
- Matins Thursday morning
- Divine Liturgy Friday morning
- Vespers each evening

### Speakers

- Metropolitan THEODOSIUS
- Bishop SERAPHIM
- Keynote speaker Protopresbyter George Dragas, Dean of Holy Cross Seminary, Brookline, Mass.

### Music Conference

Sessions on Wednesday and Thursday:  
*The Assembly of People Praise Thee: Theory and Practice of Congregational Singing Today*

### Social Events

- Reception on Tuesday evening – Carleton Art Gallery
- Thursday evening banquet followed by scenic cruise
- Saturday, the day after the Assembly, a picnic at "Fair Haven," the Archdiocesan Centre organised by the Metamorphosis Committee which fundraised and organised renovations at the Centre

**Mini-talks** given over lunch on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday (topics subject to revision)

- Reading and praying the Psalter
- How to make a good confession
- Orthodoxy and the Internet
- Sexual ethics and community life
- The heart of evangelism
- Fasting and feasting in the Church
- An encouragement to monastic life
- Raising teenagers in the Church
- Debate on liturgical language

Every parish has been sent detailed information regarding lodging, meals, and registration for delegates, observers, and their families. Please consult your parish priest. For questions or more information, please call Fr Andrew Morbey, Dean of Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral: 613-230-2687.



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## British Columbia Deanery Elects New Dean

In February, the British Columbia Deanery was blessed with a visit from Bishop SERAPHIM. At the Deanery meeting on February 24, Fr Lawrence Farley was elected Dean, to serve in this capacity until 1999. The Deanery meeting was a wonderful opportunity for the parish communities of Vancouver and the Lower Mainland to gather and to celebrate their remarkable growth. Holy Resurrection in Vancouver has recently received twelve new members. Mar Elias, having just welcomed its new pastor, Fr Johanna [John] Ayoub, is also experiencing growth and is looking into the possibility of developing its temple. St Herman of Alaska in Langley currently has twenty-nine catechumens. St Herman's is also looking for a new building. His Grace



*Clergy of the BC Deanery with the Bishop: l to r, Fr Stephen Slipko; Fr Andrey Somow; His Grace, Bishop Seraphim; the new Dean, Fr Lawrence Farley; and Fr Johanna [John] Ayoub.*

warned everyone at the Deanery meeting that the Orthodox Church is not really concerned with numbers but with establishing and developing a community of faith, and he urged us to strengthen and maintain this community of churches through communication and constant prayer.—*Subdeacon John Hainsworth, St Herman of Alaska, Surrey BC*

### Saskatchewan Experiences Pan-Orthodox Warmth

Encouraged by the Orthodox clergy association of the area, clergy and laity from OCA Parishes in Moose Jaw and Yorkton joined fellow Orthodox from Greek, Romanian and Ukrainian churches in Regina, Assiniboia, Flinftoft, Dysart and Swift Current for the Pan-Orthodox Vespers service each Sunday afternoon during Great Lent.

Participants travelled by private vehicle, rented vans, or tour buses, sometimes for up to four hours one way to attend each 5 p.m. service and the lenten meal which was served afterwards in each church basement or hall. Even tiny churches were filled to overflowing as we sang and prayed together, mostly in English but sometimes in other languages. In each parish, even loyal stay-at-home members lovingly prepared and served their lenten ethnic dishes for the many visitors.

For us it was a reunion-like atmosphere. Many who had moved away to Regina, as family members needed university and work, returned to worship and eat with us. It was a precious time of warmth and pan-Orthodox unity, though ever so brief!—*Matushka Eva Balevich, Holy Trinity, Moose Jaw*

### Pan-Orthodox Services Held in Ottawa during Lent

The pan-Orthodox Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers was celebrated this year at the Dormition of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Church. Building on this foundation, the following four Sundays of Great Lent saw Vespers served jointly by members of the Ottawa Orthodox Clergy Association, in churches of four other jurisdictions.

At the Greek church, Bishop SOTIRIOS presided and gave the homily. The second Sunday Vespers was served at St Mary Coptic Orthodox Church, with Fr Maxym Lysack of Christ the Saviour Mission (American Carpatho-Russian Diocese) as homilist. Christ the Saviour was the site of the third pan-Orthodox gathering, with Fr Shenouda of St Mary's homilising.

The fourth Sunday coincided with the Eve of the Annunciation, so the OCA Cathedral of the Annunciation and St Nicholas was the logical choice for the pan-Orthodox gathering. Hieromonk Alexander (Golizin), Associate Professor on the Theological Faculty at Marquette University (the guest of both the Cathedral and the Orthodox Fellowship of St Philip), was the preacher

*continued, next page . . .*



**Pan-Orthodox Services in Ottawa**, from p. 7:

at both the morning Liturgy of the parish that day and the evening pan-Orthodox Vigil of the Annunciation.

On the fifth Sunday, the Vespers was served at St Elias Antiochian Church, with Fr Alex Michalopoulos of the Dormition Church as preacher.

Service sheets were prepared for most of the events; this was particularly helpful at St Mary's, where the order of service was not familiar to most. Languages used included Arabic, English, Greek and Slavonic, with the mix varying according to locale. Refreshments were served after each service, providing a time for hospitality and sharing. At the Coptic church of St Mary's, there was also a formal question period at the end of the refreshment break.

All the services were well attended by a good cross-section of the various jurisdictions, both clergy and laity. As might be expected, there were larger congregations at the larger parishes. At the Cathedral, where we were wondering whether to expect twenty or eighty, we had about 120 people: people were standing on the stairs, and during the homily old and young together sat on the floor at Fr Alexander's feet, and crowded into the centre of the church, hanging on his words. Also visiting was Abbess Pelagia of the St. Thekla Convent in Syria, who together with many Arabic-speaking guests chanted hymns for the feast during the veneration of the feast day icon and anointing.

The series was a wonderful demonstration of our unity as Orthodox Christians. Many who attended were experiencing the worship of other jurisdictions or traditions for the first time, and were pleased to find that "we all pray the same." May the Lord bless those who organised the services—and may they be repeated in years to come.—*Jane Szepesi, Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral*

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*Dedicated to the memory of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow (+1925), Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov), and other missionary labourers of the Orthodox Church in America.*

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## News in Brief

At the spring 1996 meeting of the Metropolitan Council of the OCA, **Fr Andrew Morbey**, Dean of Ontario and a member of the Metropolitan Council, was appointed to the council's *Diocesan Boundaries Subcommittee*, which is examining the boundaries of the OCA dioceses and the demographics therein, in order to make recommendations as to whether or not adjustments are needed. **Mary Ann Lopoukhine**, the lay delegate from the Archdiocese of Canada to the Metropolitan Council, was appointed to the *Membership Subcommittee*, which is reviewing the various meanings of the term "membership" used in the OCA, an examination necessary to the process of gaining a clearer picture of the true size and demographic profile of the Orthodox Church in America.

At the spring 1996 session of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the OCA, **Prof Richard Schneider** of Christ the Saviour Cathedral, Toronto, was appointed to serve as one of the members of the *Pre-Conciliar Commission for the 12th All America Council*, which will be held in 1998.

*Regards orthodoxes*, a francophone radio broadcast on Orthodoxy, has been airing in Montreal, since November 1995, every Sunday from 11 a.m. until noon. The program is produced by **Lilianne Issa** and **Simon Kouldevsky** and directed by **Pères Irénée (Rochon) and Cyrille (Bradette)**. As a result of the program, calls of inquiry about Orthodoxy have been received on the "hot line" of the Orthodox Clergy Association of Quebec.

**Matushka Donna Farley** has recently been appointed Poetry Editor of a new quarterly magazine for Orthodox women, *The Handmaiden*, published by Conciliar Press under the auspices of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. The beautifully produced journal is pan-Orthodox in its editorial advisory board, its authorship, and its readership. A subscription is US\$15 per year and can be ordered from Conciliar Press, P.O. Box 76, Ben Lomond CA 95005-0076. Anyone wishing to submit poetry to Matushka Donna for consideration should write to her and ask for submission guidelines, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope: 9642 - 139 St., Surrey BC V3T 5H3.

In March of this year, Bishop SERAPHIM appointed **Priestmonk David (Edwards)** to be the *Youth Contact Person* between the Archdiocese of Canada and the OCA's Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

At the spring 1996 meeting of the Holy Synod, **Fr Leonid Kishkovsky**, chairman of the *Task Force on Orthodox Immigrants*, was asked by the Bishops to investigate any instances of discrimination by **Canadian immigration authorities** against Russians immigrating to Canada from Israel. The Bishops also asked the Task Force to publicize existing programs for new immigrants in North America in order that parishes can assist in their resettlement.



## Icons Topic of OCW Lenten Conference

Orthodox Christian Women (OCW) of Montreal held their most successful conference ever on March 2, with over 120 participants in this, their 5th annual lenten pan-Orthodox retreat. The morning keynote speaker was Fr Andrew Tregubov, an Orthodox priest from New Hampshire who is also an iconographer of uncommon skill and artistry. Using the work of his mentor Fr Gregory Kroug as a central focus, he showed a series of slides illustrating the way that through the art of the iconographer, the faithful are drawn into the visual experience of the Kingdom of God and of Him who is the Light of God's Glory.

Fr Andrew also led a workshop in the afternoon which gave participants a good opportunity to ask various questions about the art of iconography. Afternoon speakers also included Rhoda Zion, who gave an historical background for the feast of the triumph of the icons (the Sunday of Orthodoxy), and Fr Cyrille (Bradette) who presented in French a workshop on the liturgical use of icons, emphasizing their role in Orthodox spirituality.

Orthodox Christian Women of Montreal is made up of women from many ethnic backgrounds and Orthodox jurisdictions who come together to share common experiences and explore their common concerns in the light of the Orthodox faith and traditions. Mary Tkachuk is this year's president of the group's pan-Orthodox board of directors.



*Fr Andrew Tregubov, centre, with Fr Cyrille (Bradette) and Rhoda Zion, speakers at the OCW lenten conference.*

## Saskatchewan Priest Tells of Desert Monastery Experience



*Elder Ephraim in the Arizona desert.*

Recently I was blessed to visit what is probably the newest Orthodox monastic establishment in North America. A little less than a year ago, several monks arrived in Florence, Arizona, a desert area surrounded by cactus, to begin the Monastery of St Anthony the Great. They are all under the spiritual direction of Elder Ephraim, a monk of the Holy Monastery of Philotheou on Mt Athos, who is also the spiritual father of eleven other monasteries in the US and Canada, as well as of countless laypeople and clergymen.

St Anthony's Monastery presently houses twenty monks, with another ten waiting to move onto the grounds when the facilities are built. The hegumen is Fr Paisios, elected abbot and elevated to the position in January on the first feast day of the monastery. A Canadian of Greek background, he has spent the last ten years on Mount Athos. (I figured right off that he had to be Canadian, because he can pronounce "Saskatchewan" and knows where it is!) There is one other Canadian in the cenobium; all the others are from the US and Greece. The liturgical language is Greek, and they are on the new calendar.

My guide and host at the monastery was Fr Gregory, a monk from St Tikhon's whom I had met there ten years ago. He had decided to come to this monastery for health reasons, but he has also been a spiritual son of Fr Ephraim for a long time.

The buildings the monks use are all mobile homes, but the huge church of St Nectarios and the *trapeznitsa* (dining hall) are nearly complete. The

*continued, page 11 . . .*



## Seven Jurisdictions Represented at Conference for Orthodox Educators

On 28 October 1995, the third annual Orthodox Christian Education Conference was held in Edmonton, this year hosted by St Anthony Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Almost fifty clergy and lay people attended, representing the Antiochian, Coptic, Indian, OCA, Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian jurisdictions.

The aim of this conference was to build the talents and skills of both church school teachers and parents in order to enhance the sharing of the Orthodox Christian faith with our children and youth. The major focus this year was on active participation.

Mary Romanko (Patriarchate of Romania) opened the conference with an outstanding session on active participation. She kept each participant totally involved and keenly interested in her presentation, both covertly and overtly. She demonstrated and emphasized this through all modes of learning and teaching styles, whether auditory, visual, or kinesthetic. She encouraged us to do the same when preparing church school lessons for our students. This way we are more likely to enhance individual learning and retention. The session could be summarized this way: Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand!

Fr Andrew Jarmus (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada) spoke to us about stages of spiritual development from ages five through seventeen, outlining the developmental characteristics of students and how these affect their relationship with God. He also made some very useful suggestions regarding appropriate Biblical teachings for each level of development.

Ben Machnee (Antiochian Archdiocese) gave a rousing presentation on how to build a confident, caring

teen/youth group. He emphasized the importance of keeping the children thirteen to seventeen years of age within the church. We can do this by showing them genuine expressions of love and care, positively affirming them and spending time with individuals. He stressed that the students need to develop a vision and have goals. They also need to have a well developed schedule of organized events. He strongly believes in providing students with the opportunity to attend youth retreats.



*1995 conference participants sharing a luncheon break together.*

Fr Mousa Mattar (Coptic Orthodox Church) led delegates in a meaningful afternoon meditation on sanctification, and Fr Victor Lakusta (Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada) led a problem-solving session in which everyone brain-stormed for solutions to common problems and concerns. The conference concluded with a sharing session in which several wonderful ideas and projects were presented. Sylvia Gray, also of the Ukrainian jurisdiction, skillfully co-ordinated this session.

We were left uplifted and inspired, eager to continue doing the Lord's work in this ministry to our young people. We are looking forward to the next conference which will be held on Friday, Oct 25 in the evening and all day Saturday, Oct 26, 1996 at St Mary and St Mark Coptic Orthodox Church in Edmonton. The theme will be "Drawing the most out of our students."

Videotapes of the 1995, 1994, and 1993 educational conferences are available from Tim Hawrysh, 103 - 147 Street, Edmonton AB T5N 3C3. Cost is \$10 each.

—Lydia Fedor, Church School Co-ordinator, St Herman of Alaska Church, Edmonton



## Metropolitan Council Spring Meeting

The Metropolitan Council met in New York on April 2nd, various subcommittees having met prior to the Council's convening. After serving an opening Moleben, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS presented both his introductory remarks and a review of the work of the spring session of the Holy Synod. He commented on the need for prayer, patience and reconciliation in the matter of the Estonian Church and related controversies. He also noted the temptation of introducing the notions of "conservative" and "liberal" into matters of Church life, and thus of subjecting to "party spirit" something that transcends ideological and political categories. His review of the spring session of the Holy Synod touched upon a wide variety of matters being addressed by the Bishops, including inter-church affairs, episcopal vacancies, and the on-going life of our dioceses.

Protopresbyter Robert Kondratik, Chancellor of the OCA, presented a report which focused on a review of the work of the Central Church Administration (CCA) offices and ministry units. The new Treasurer of the OCA, Protodeacon Eric Wheeler, gave an overview of the 1995 Diocesan Assessment Report and Parish Census. He brought Council up to date on the 1996 operating budget, noting that the CCA commitments suffer because diocesan assessments are not, in many cases, being remitted in a timely manner. Council members reviewed and raised questions concerning the Diocesan Reports, which contained information and summaries of diocesan life for each of our dioceses in 1995.

Perhaps the most important discussion at this juncture revolved around the renewal of Church life in the Alaskan diocese. It was heartening to hear that, in spite of serious financial problems, the Alaskan Church is once again

### Desert monastic experience, continued from p. 9:

permanent living quarters for the monks as well as accommodations for guests will be built shortly. It is hard to believe that only six months ago this was only a desert, because this spiritual island seems to have the feeling that it is as old as Athos itself.

On the feast of St Anthony, Bishop Anthony of San Francisco (Greek Archdiocese of North and South America), in whose diocese the monastery is, celebrated Liturgy with three thousand people present in the semi-completed church. He stated that this will be "the Lavra for America" [Lavra is the name of the largest monastery on Mt Athos], and that Elder Archimandrite Ephraim is the "apostle of monasticism in America."

This was my first experience of one of Fr Ephraim's communities, but I sensed in it the same spirituality that is common in the great monastic communities of Ukraine.—Fr Dennis Pihach, Yorkton, Saskatchewan

flourishing. According to the report of the Alaskan Chancellor, Archpriest Nicholas Molodyko-Harris, clergy synaxes are enjoying tremendous success, and clergy with extensive Alaskan experience are returning to the diocese. Five new temples are about to be consecrated. Archpriest Michael Oleksa has been appointed Dean of St Herman's Seminary, which has a full complement of students (including Canada's own Deacon Robert John Polson from Holy Resurrection, Saskatoon).

Following brief discussion on the reports concerning the OCA Health and Life Insurance programs and the Pension Board, attention turned to the work of the Council's subcommittees. These are four in number. The first, led by Dr Alice Woog, is examining the role of the Metropolitan Council in the life of the OCA, and in particular, its function with regard to the Central Church Administration, the dioceses, and the All-American Council. The second group is moderated by Fr Eugene Vansuch, and is reviewing the various meanings of "membership" as used in the OCA. This term is rather slippery, since it is sometimes used in reference to "voting members," at other times to "members practising a certain level of stewardship," and at yet other times to "all baptised believers" or "communicants" in a community. In order to gain a clearer picture of our true size and demographic profile, it is obvious that we must find a common terminology.

Judge Harold Kalina heads the third group, which is reviewing the structure of diocesan administration. This group is examining "the deanery," as perhaps our most effective institutional unit. The fourth group is led by Fr Gregory Safchuk, and is given the task of reviewing diocesan boundaries. In order to do this, the group is working on the question of just what principles are involved in establishing a diocese, as well as attempting to draw together pertinent demographic data.

The work of the Metropolitan Council, which meets twice a year following the fall and spring sessions of the Holy Synod, has finally been streamlined by the timely distribution of all reports prior to the Council meeting. This has done away with the unutterable awfulness and wastefulness of listening to the reading of reports! Fr Andrew Morbey and Mary Ann Lopoukhine are the current delegates from our Archdiocese. Fr Andrew is on the Diocesan Boundaries Subcommittee and Mary Ann serves on the Membership Subcommittee.

—Fr Andrew Morbey, Dean of Ontario

## Archdiocesan Council Spring Meeting

Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral in Montreal was the site of the spring 1996 meeting of the Archdiocesan Council, at which the July 1996 diocesan assembly was a major topic of discussion and planning. The Council did further refining work on the Sample Parish By-laws, a document which is only a model but which, it is hoped, parishes will be able to use in creating and/or refining

continued, last page . . .



**Archdiocesan Council meeting**, *continued from p. 11:*

their own by-laws. This document will be distributed in booklet form at the assembly, along with an updated version of the diocesan directory. Much discussion also went into the planning of presentations and reports to the assembly, the "business" component of the assembly (including proposed amendments to the by-laws of the Archdiocese itself), and the educational and pastoral components of the triennial meeting.

Under diocesan financial matters, the Treasurer reported that for the first time since his incumbency, for the year 1995 the Archdiocese did not run a deficit. He noted, however, that he receives very little feedback from the quarterly financial reports which he sends to each parish. He urges all parish treasurers to look at these carefully and report any questions or concerns to him.

An important task of the Archdiocesan Council is the distribution of the Special Appeals collections. At this meeting \$1800 was distributed for seminarian assistance, \$1500 for missions assistance, and \$1900 for Orthodox charities.

In his report to the Council, Bishop SERAPHIM emphasized again his continuing persistent development of the deanery structure of the Archdiocese, a structure of support and communication which has to become more and more important in a diocese of this size. He also called attention to the significant developments in our missionary life this year:

In one parish, twenty-one were received into the Church at Pascha, with another nine being readied for Pentecost. In other communities there are twelve or more being prepared. In some there is not such brilliance, but nevertheless a steady even flow of persons being united to the Body of Christ, all across the country. There is also increase in monastic interest. While we still try hard to develop a more systematic way of undertaking missionary witness, a need more and more acutely felt in the light of the hunger around us, the Lord nevertheless brings those who are ready to follow to the Spring that gives Life. So let us continue in every way, but especially through prayer, to cooperate with this movement of the Holy Spirit in hearts.

—r2

**Additions to the Archdiocesan Intercessions List:**

- ◆ Priest Lionel Dixon
- ◆ Deacon Mark Korban, wife Rebekah  
Children: Jonathan, Daniel,  
Martha, Peter, Jesse, Micah

**Pastors and Church School Teachers:**

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada has a Church School curriculum available which may be of use to our own schools, and Bishop SERAPHIM encourages investigation of it. It consists of three volumes:

Our Faith - level 1: pre-school

Our Faith - level 2: 6 - 7 years

Our Faith - level 3: 8 - 9 years

Publishing was from 1991-1995 and the price is about \$16 per manual. Contact: Ukrainian Orthodox Church Consistory Bookstore, 9 St Johns Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 1G8.

**Diocesan Communicators:**

A newly revised version of the Archdiocesan Directory will be available at the time of the diocesan assembly in July. If you are not able to attend, please write and request your copy of the directory from the Bishop's Eastern Secretary:

Ms Olga Jurgens,  
Eastern Secretary,  
Archdiocese of Canada, OCA,  
P.O. Box 179,  
Spencerville On K0E 1X0.

**RETURN ADDRESS:**

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