

**ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST 46TH DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY
OCTOBER 1-3, 2007
CLEVELAND, OHIO**

**CHICAGO DEANERY
Very Reverend Thomas Mueller, Dean**

YOUTH CAMP

We have just completed our annual Deanery Youth Camp, with 27 youth from six deanery parishes participating (8/16-19). The cooperation of the campers with the staff and with one another was extraordinary. The kids were respectful, kind, and appreciative of each other, presenting a real model of church life. The educational theme, presented by Frs. Tom Mueller and Seminarian Intern Nathan Preston, dealt with Orthodox interpretations of themes from the life of Moses. The camp included daily services, Saturday Vespers and Sunday Liturgy; recreational activities included swimming boating, ropes course, tower climbing, archery, tube slide, nature walks, and art. Thanks to the counselors named above and to Pat and Natalie Labun of St. Joseph's in Wheaton, and to Gina Mueller and Oana Deselnicu of SS Cyril & Methodius, Milwaukee. We are planning a winter weekend retreat from Feb. 8-10, 2008 at the same Edwards YMCA Camp near East Troy, WI. Archbishop JOB visited the camp and spoke with the youth on Friday, 8/17.

LATE VOCATIONS/HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

We are finishing a here year cycle in the program with sessions on Ethics and the Canons, Pastoral Practice, Homiletics, and Practical Liturgics (the latter three for diaconal training purposes). The program has seven students, of whom four are potential diaconal candidates. It is under Fr. Elijah Mueller's direction and utilizes primarily the services of doctoral level theologians.

LENTEN SUNDAY VESPERS

Our services, held at St. Elizabeth in Chesterton, St. Panteleimon in Summit, Archangel Michael in Burbank, St. Nicholas in Kenosha, and Holy Trinity Cathedral, were followed by talks on the theme "So Great a Cloud of Witnesses." Anna Strelka, a student in the Higher Education Program and Catechist in Palatine, Deacon Thomas Keith, Popadia Rebecca Luft, Higher Education instructor, and Deacon Timothy Jones spoke, respectively, on St. Cosmas of Aetolia, St. Silouan of Mt. Athos, Archbishop Anthony Bloom, and St. Maria of Paris. The talks were all well done and well received. The annual clergy family Paschal dinner took place on Sunday, April 29th, at the Archbishop's residence.

OCA FINANCIAL SCANDAL

While supporting the Archbishop and Diocesan Council in their actions, the great majority of clergy and parishes have not been in turmoil regarding this over the past year. Deanery clergy were surveyed carefully before the last Diocesan Council meeting in late

June. Parishes are focused on their own spiritual health, with the state of the Central Administration, whatever the extent of complicity may be, still somewhat remote in parish consciousness. People's attention is not fixated on internet commentary.

SEMINARIAN SUPPORT: The Deanery has given its semi-annual stipend to Deacon Paul Coates from St. Nicholas, Joliet.

OTHER: Several deanery clergy formed a focus group with the Chicago Battered Women's Network to assist them in their development of a faith-based curriculum; this was in exchange for the Network's workshop at our Diocesan clergy convocation. We are attempting to develop social service resources guides for each area of the deanery as a follow-up.

TRANSITIONS

Received and attached to Holy Apostles Mission, Normal, IL: Priest Justin Foster; Deacon Joshua Lollar (to St. Elizabeth, Chesterton); Ordained to the diaconate; Deacon Herman Kincaid; Deacon Timothy Jones (attached to SS Cyril & Methodius, Milwaukee); Released: Archpriest Michael Sekela to the Diocese of Washington & NY; On loan: Priests Basil Aden (to the Carpatho-Russian Diocese) and Alexander Lukashonak (to the Greek Metropolis of Chicago). Granted "Chapel" status: St. Herman of Alaska Chapel in West Bend, WI (formerly a mission station).

PARISH NOTES as received (by dean's request at May meeting & by e-mail) as of 8/21. Later submissions may be distributed in an Assembly addendum.

CHRIST THE SAVIOR, CHICAGO: Blessing of beautiful new iconostas by Archbishop JOB on eve of patronal feast, 8/15; great efforts at beautification of Temple and grounds; consecration set for 5/17/08.

HOLY APOSTLES, NORMAL: Slow, steady growth; attachment of Fr. Justin Foster, allowing fuller liturgical cycle; Sunday School attracting new children; parish youth camp in conjunction with patronal feast; outreach to Moldovan orphans, local homeless shelter, and correctional facility; building and grounds improvements.

HOLY RESURRECTION, PALATINE: Anna Strelka serving as lay catechist for 3 years (in discussions regarding Diocesan catechist program); Women's Ministry focusing on support of The Society for the Preservation of Human Dignity, which provides counseling, support, & services to those facing issues relating to pregnancy and childcare – this involves fund raising via ethnic coffee hours, parish picnic, etc to procure formula, diapers, and the like; hosted CROP/CWS Walk last fall, raising \$2000 from parish alone – to do so again this fall; hosted sacred concert by Milliken University Chorale, filling the church; hosted presentation in April by Fr. Andrew Tregobov – "ICON: IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE" – plan to have him continue iconography in Temple.

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION CHAPEL, SISTER BAY (DOOR CO.), WI.:

Sat.Vespers & Sun. Liturgy once monthly May through September, served by retired Archpriest Michael Herrick; hosts St. Matthew's (Green Bay) participation in Sister Bay's annual Fall Festival; chapel designed & built by Architect Pat Mangan on his property, accessible & open to the public; ministry to the East European young people imported to staff tourist industry.

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL: hosted a 50th anniversary of ordination celebration for Archpriest Sergei Garklavs on Aug. 19; held Parish Health Workshop by Joe Kormos on July 7; sponsored "KIDS' DAY AT BROOKFIELD ZOO WITH ARCHBISHOP JOB" on 7/31; held a greeters/docents (for church tours) workshop on 6/24.

ST CLEMENT OF OCHRID, MERRILLVILLE: parish property placed on the market, with a plan to participate in parish life at Protection of the Theotokos in Merrillville after the sale, as a way of testing out possible future merger for benefit of both communities.

ST. ELIZABETH, CHESTERTON: several grad students and families from Notre Dame Univ. have joined, including Dcn. Joshua Lollar(see "Transitions"); focus on physical repair to Temple – new windows for nave; hosted Deanery Lenten Vespers for first time in new Temple.

ST. JOSEPH, WHEATON: sponsored Mission Trip to Appalachia for youth & parents in spring; raised funds for Fr Michael Mihalick & family and collected paper icons for OCA missions in Mexico; new parish photo directory; assistance to out-of-work parish families & 7 deanery youth camp scholarships – sent 11 kids and 2 counselors to camp in August; hall damaged by flooding, with subsequent insurance-funded renovation – new hall planned with fund-raising of \$250,000 underway; meal outreach to Nicholas Larson Home for Homeless Veterans in Wheaton on a regular basis; 3 liturgies on Sunday (Ukrainian, English, Slavonic.)

ST. LUKE, PALOS HILLS: 100 adults, 53 youth; average Sunday attendance 104; budget \$157,000; 9/11 annual memorial with Archbishop JOB and local dignitaries; alternate site for local PADS homeless program (food ministry); supported 10 charitable programs with at least \$500 per charity; one of sponsors for Quad Parish Picnic in June (includes St. Panteleimon, Archangel Michael, & St Peter & St Paul); completed 4-year program using Purpose Driven Life church school curriculum; will be working with Joe Kormos on building loving relationships in the parish – completed test for Natural Church Development.

ST. NICHOLAS, JOLIET: celebrating 100th anniversary in September – founded in 1907 by Carpatho-Rusyns, Greeks, Serbs, with first Temple that year; in 1959 2.5 Acres purchased for new church and home; new property completed in 1966 with burning of mortgage in 1971; Fr. John E. Kuchta has been rector for over 50 years, his only parish assignment; involved in local Pan-Orthodox activities – Thanksgiving Liturgy & Sun.of Orthodoxy; assist Joliet Food Pantry; active in Chicago Pan- Orthodox activities, including Pan-Orthodox Choir & March for Life; parishioner Paul Coates ordained to diaconate while attending St. Vladimir's Seminary.

ST. NICHOLAS, KENOSHA: hosted seminarian intern Nathan Preston over the summer; Nathan & Fr Stephen Hrycyniak helped coordinate the deanery youth camp; the Spiritual Life Center attracts drop-in daily; daily services; weekly akathist in the summer with “Stump the Seminarian” question & answer session after; Marriage Enrichment Seminar with pastoral psychologist attracted 7 couples; CPR training by parish nurses; small food pantry for neighborhood.

ST PETER & ST PAUL, BURR RIDGE: celebrated 75th anniversary 6/30 - 7/1 with Metropolitan HERMAN & Archbishop JOB; godparents Sunday, pre-Advent & pre-Lenten dinners; Lenten retreat; participation in Quad Parish Picnic; Choral Concert; FOCA Midwest District Bowlvention; annual golf tournament; Spring-Fall series of Adult Education; speakers; adopt a seminarian participation.

SS CYRIL & METHODIUS, MILWAUKEE: 80th anniversary year – parish photo directory and one-day conference on “Poverty in the Tradition of the Church” in November to commemorate; parish outreach programs – Women’s/Families’ Emergency Shelter, Hunger Task Force food-sorting, Milwaukee Inner-City Congregation Allied for Hope (MICAH) - relating to health care in Milwaukee Public Schools and issues of jobs; prayer vigils at homicide sites with MICAH, weekly after school arts program at church for neighborhood kids; provision of free annual block party for neighborhood in July; helped put on huge Pan-Orthodox picnic and Vespers for kids in May (with about 35 adults and kids from parish); sponsorship of parish pre-Med student in trip to Uganda to study AIDS and help install water purification systems in homes; assistance to a couple of parish’s immigrant families in financial crisis; parish includes large groups of Ethiopians, Romanians, other Eastern Europeans getting along very harmoniously – almost nobody has any available money, whether immigrant or born American, resulting in financial struggle; 85 adults, 35 children; 11 youth and 3 counselors/helpers at deanery youth camp.